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Global trends in world politics as a limitation of the foreign policy maneuvers of the state

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze the global trends in political development and the state's position in the international relations matrix, with a special focus on the importance of choosing a development model for the state, particularly in terms of European and Euro-Atlantic foreign policy vectors. This study employs a descriptive analytical research design. The data were gathered from a comprehensive review of relevant literature on globalization, deglobalization, European integration, and Euro-Atlantic development. The research finds that globalization is a megatrend that has significant implications for the present world order. The increasing influence of post-modern structures, such as transnational corporations, and the global digitalization in all spheres of life of society, especially during pandemics, have accelerated global processes and are viewed as tools for sustainable development. Deglobalization, manifested in regionalization and glocalization, is considered a countertrend for globalization. The article also emphasizes the crucial role of European and Euro-Atlantic integration in the state's participation in globalization processes. The analysis presented in this article has several practical implications. It suggests that the state's foreign policy must be aligned with globalization trends and the deglobalization of the global universe's influence, establishing new centers of the world order and new regional powers. It also highlights the importance of European integration and the Euro-Atlantic vector of development in the state's globalization strategy.

Keywords: globalization, deglobalization, global trends, foreign policy, correlation



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Public Interest Statement

The article emphasizes the importance of European and Euro-Atlantic integration in a state's participation in globalization processes. It suggests that foreign policy should align with globalization trends and deglobalize global influence, establishing new world order centers and regional powers. The article also underscores the significance of European integration and the Euro-Atlantic development vector in a state's globalization strategy.

Introduction

Ukraine has been continuously searching for its own position in the international relations system during the formation and development of its statehood. However, it is not always possible to respond appropriately to foreign policy challenges, which are mainly created by global players and development trends. To establish an effective development strategy for the Ukrainian state, including foreign policy, it is necessary to consider global trends in international politics and adapt interactions accordingly within the global matrix while maintaining democratic values as the objective and tools of political development.

It is worth noting that Ukraine has identified its geostrategic objectives, general foreign policy, and model of future development. European and Euro-Atlantic vectors have been prioritized for the state. However, the strategy must be compliant with universal development trends and modified to best preserve Ukraine's national interests.

The present study aims to prove the hypothesis that analysis of global development megatrends and correlation of Ukrainian foreign policy can provide efficient tools for the protection of Ukraine's interests on the international arena.

This research is based on open-source research, including analytical materials from Ukrainian research centers of global development trends and foreign policy, scientific and public source materials, national regulations, and documents that comprise Ukraine's foreign policy. Analysis of these sources enabled the identification of global development megatrends and directions for Ukraine's foreign policy. The research was conducted within the framework of an analytical investigation of global development trends and directions of Ukraine's foreign policy.

Literature Review

The literature on global trends in world politics has been a subject of much academic inquiry over the past few decades (Kennedy et al., 2002; Blanton & Kegley, 2020). Researchers have explored the implications of globalization, regional integration, and the changing balance of power in international relations. In this article, we will review some of the key works that have contributed to our understanding of these trends, and their impact on the foreign policy maneuvers of the state, with a particular focus on Ukraine.

Globalization has been one of the most significant trends in world politics in recent decades. Many scholars have analyzed its impact on the international system, including the changes it has brought to trade, finance, and political relations. For example, Held et al. (2000) argue that globalization has created a new era of interconnectedness and interdependence, in which states are increasingly reliant on each other for economic growth and security. Similarly, Stiglitz (2006) has emphasized the challenges that globalization has brought to democracy, as global institutions can constrain the policy choices of democratically elected governments.

Regional integration has also been key to developments in world politics over the past few

decades. The European Union (EU), for example, has been at the forefront of efforts to deepen cooperation between states. Some scholars have characterized this process as a move towards a post-national political order (Habermas, 2001). Others have highlighted the potential for regional integration to increase the economic competitiveness of participating states (Baldwin & Portes, 1994).

Finally, many researchers have analyzed changes in the balance of power in world politics. With the rise of China and other emerging powers, the traditional dominance of the West in international relations is being challenged. Some scholars have highlighted the potential for this shift to lead to a more multipolar world, with several centers of power (Ikenberry, 2008). Others have emphasized the risks associated with the rise of new powers, including the potential for conflict (Mearsheimer, 2019).

In the context of Ukraine, these global trends have important implications for the country's foreign policy maneuvers. For example, efforts to deepen economic cooperation with the EU are likely to be influenced by broader processes of regional integration in Europe. Similarly, Ukraine's ability to navigate the shifting balance of power in world politics will be a key determinant of its foreign policy priorities. Overall, a nuanced appreciation of global trends is essential for understanding the limitations of foreign policy maneuvers of the state, including Ukraine.

Methods

The research methodology is based on a systematic, interdisciplinary, and pluralistic approach to comprehensively study the issues of Ukraine's foreign policy transformation in new geopolitical realities. The defined goal involves the use of the following general scientific and special research methods:

- The analysis method was used to identify the global trends of the world political process to adjust interactions in the international matrix accordingly.
- The synthesis method was used to substantiate the results of the study regarding the assessment of instruments for protecting Ukraine's interests in the international arena.
- The dialectical method allowed us to consider Ukraine's state of constant search for its place in the system of international relations.
- The historical approach was applied during the analysis of the process of changes in the general vectors of foreign policy development in Ukraine.
- The comparison method was used to compare the influence of such megatrends of modern planetary development as "globalization" and "deglobalization" on Ukraine's foreign policy.

The study also involved the analysis of Ukrainian centers' materials for studying trends in world development and foreign policy, scientific and journalistic materials, state regulations, and documents influencing the formation of Ukraine's foreign policy.

Results and Discussion

Globalization is an inherent, evolving social process, and the development of human civilization has always been compliant with integration needs. It is impossible to bypass or postpone these processes; they are objective and onerous. Indubitably, globalization comprises priorities (during a particular historical period), megatrends, and trends that meet objectives set for humankind. Indeed, scientists' positions regarding megatrends of global development and their priority are not unanimous.

Thus, Ukrainian professor Olena Koppel chooses three mainstreams among the priorities: global development, transformation of the current system of international relations caused by integration processes, and modification of the political systems of particular states influenced by democracy (Koppel,

2020; Koppel & Parkhomchuk, 2017). For that reason, the megatrend «globalization» is the preferred one. Alternatively, Ukrainian philosopher Baumeister (2021) used the concept of «new» globalization in his lecture «What world are we heading toward?» Analyzing the works of global experts, he claims that the main trend of the global process is a «new sacred union,» the restoration of the format/structure of the international relations system established in the 19th century. Obviously, the intrinsic value of this union is new, typical for the 21st century, but the main trends have remained historically.

The scientist draws our attention to the fact that in the 19th century, there were two centers of power, the Entente and the Triple Alliance, and World War I took place at the beginning of the 20th century. This dual system was restored after World War II and consisted of the capitalist or Western Bloc headed by the USA and the Soviet or Eastern Bloc headed by the USSR.

This system of international relations was ruined by the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, and in the last thirty years, the USA has been the global hegemon. Nowadays, a new matrix of international relations, a new system of international relations with indistinct characteristics and structure, is emerging. The USA, the Russian Federation, and China remain leaders in this system as experienced players, but simultaneously, new centers of power – Turkey, Japan, and India in the future – have been shaped (and are still being shaped). International interaction among these structural elements is developed on a pragmatic basis, encompassing social equality, economic and ecological issues, «new» globalization, etc. (Baumeister, 2021). It is obvious that new international actors will actively fight (and are fighting) for shaping the new global order, claiming the special status in it. That is why according to Baumeister (2021), the project «globalization» will be finished due to active structural fights within the turbulent system of international relations.

Thus, without contradiction of the globalization process and focusing on its «new contents,» the Ukrainian philosopher underlines that the process of the new global order formation will surely influence Ukraine, alter its global rating, change Ukrainian international politics, and consequently, it will be necessary to change Ukrainian international politics.

We should mention that the following phenomena are logically connected to the megatrend of «globalization»:

- The enhanced influence of transnational corporations (TNCs) on the global process of post-modern structures, from IT to pharmaceuticals. These giants impose their agenda on the world and try to sideline major international players (states) from making political decisions (Global Security, Political and Economic Trends in the World and their Influence on Ukraine”, 2021).
- The global digitalization of all spheres of social existence that accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic. States and other international actors infiltrate network space and, on the contrary, shape virtual existence, and economics, politics, diplomacy, war, etc., move into it. Global corporations such as Twitter or Facebook have already privatized censorship; they eliminate and delete “controversial” content in their opinion.

“Deglobalization” (regionalization, glocalization) is an opposite trend to globalization (Chanda, 2007; Kuciński, 2011; Pomieciński, 2009). If globalization is viewed mainly as a positive process that promotes peace and stability in the world (though there are other assessments) and has already passed its peak of development, deglobalization is a relatively new trend where every state and every participant in the global political process must take responsibility for the future of the world.

Globalization and Ukraine (Implementation of the Course: through Europe to the Global Community)

The Swiss Economic Institute developed a methodology to identify globalization indices of countries. According to the methodology, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Belgium occupy the first places in the general indices, which include the economic, social, and political components of the state, with scores of 90.79, 90.68, and 90.46, respectively. Ukraine occupies the 44th place in this Index with a score of 74.95, and its political component equals 88.32, indicating the active role of our state in global political processes (indices are calculated for 203 countries worldwide) (The Global Economy, 2018).

Further European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine as a part of the European world and global civilization is an important interaction of incorporation into the globalization processes.

In 2014, Ukraine and the European Union signed the Association Agreement, which formally came into effect on September 1, 2017 (Embassy of Ukraine, 2021).

The development of international relations with Central and Eastern European countries, especially those which border Ukraine (Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, etc.), is vitally important for the implementation of the European vector of Ukraine's current foreign policy. The pan-European process is an important geopolitical factor in the new system of international relations for the countries mentioned above, including Ukraine.

On its way towards the European Union, Ukraine faces numerous obstacles, one of which is the active opposition of the Russian Federation to these European integration processes. Russia considers them a threat to its own "integration" plans for Ukraine. Consequently, the Russian Federation worked (and still works) on the development of alternative tools to influence Ukrainian policy, including economic, political, and other aspects.

Russia focused its efforts on conducting extensive information campaigns against Ukraine in European countries to slow down Ukraine's integration with the European Union. Realizing that such tactics were ineffective, Russia launched an armed aggression against Ukraine in 2014, resulting in the direct and indirect use of Russian armed forces against Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Meanwhile, the European choice in Ukraine's foreign policy is a natural one, as Ukraine is a European state with a unique geographical position, transportation and communication infrastructure, high cultural potential, and rich historical traditions (Perepelytsia & Potiekhin, 2015). Therefore, active interaction with European countries and institutions rose quite naturally to the level of a state-building objective of Ukraine, first as associate membership of the EU and later as full membership.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine abolished the neutral "non-bloc" status of Ukraine by a supermajority of votes on December 23, 2014. Deputies identified priorities in foreign policy: "integration of Ukraine with European political, economic, legal space with the full EU membership objective" and "further cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in order to meet requirements for membership in this organization" (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014).

This state strategy is reflected in the Constitution of Ukraine (2019 Ed.) with an additional article on the strategic course for the acquisition of full membership in the European Union and NATO. NATO Deputy Secretary Mircea Geoană confirmed at the Crimea Platform Summit on September 23, 2021, in Kyiv that it is realistic for Ukraine to acquire NATO membership status. He claimed that Ukraine, as well as Georgia, will become members of NATO (Vlasenko, 2021).

The course of integration with the EU and NATO announced by the Ukrainian government not only meets the national needs of Ukraine but is also a globalization strategy. The EU is a global center of power, and Ukraine should become a part of it.

However, there are serious obstacles in this way:

1. The Russian Federation seeks to establish a strong Eurasian regional bloc to restore its global

influence, not only with Belarus but also with Ukraine, the Baltic countries, Kazakhstan, and other countries.

2. The new global order will be established through a tested mechanism of international hierarchy (social Darwinism): a struggle between new ambitious regions/centers of power (Turkey, Japan, India, etc.) and old organizations (the USA, the EU, China, the Russian Federation, etc.).

3. It is highly probable that the territories of Eastern Europe/Ukraine will be used as an arena for this struggle.

Outcome 1. The European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine is rightly seen as the most important factor in the country's foreign policy. This process should make the transformation of the state into a buffer zone impossible and promote Ukraine's integration into the Euro-Atlantic security space and European political and socio-economic spaces. Ukraine's movement towards the European and Euro-Atlantic space was one of the reasons for Russian aggression, which began in 2014 with the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the capturing of Eastern territories of Ukraine. D. Piescov, the press secretary of the Russian President V. Putin, declared (in the Kremlin) that Ukraine's accession to NATO and bringing its infrastructure close to Russian borders would make Russia use "countermeasures" (Radio Liberty, 2021).

The authors, Ihnatieva & Vinnichuk (2021), have already written about the "naivety of the Ukrainian nation," which conveys the creation of an illusory world in which Ukrainian society exists. When the external (real) world puts challenges in front of Ukraine (the state, politics, civil society, etc.), it is unable to react equally.

Ukraine's political elite considered that the state's integration with the EU and NATO would form a protective barrier against the Russian Federation, and Ukraine could count on continuous support from its Western partners. For example, in the situation with Nord Stream 2, Ukrainian mass media accused the USA and Germany of neglecting Ukraine's interests and "betrayal" of Ukraine (BBC News Ukraine, 2021). However, international relations are based on a pragmatic approach and the promotion of the nation's own interests, and "sponsorship" is a well-calculated strategy. On the contrary, a lack of sponsorship is characteristic of the disappearance of an international subject/object from "the Grand Chessboard" of international politics.

Russian military aggression has led to new foreign policy trends that directly influence Ukrainian foreign policy. Firstly, the Russian war outweighed the influence of all other global and regional factors on Ukraine's foreign policy. Counteracting Russian military aggression became the objective of Ukraine's foreign policy. Secondly, being a buffer zone and a part of the post-Soviet space, Ukraine turned into a center of inter-civilizational conflict and geopolitical confrontation. Thirdly, geopolitical trends changed under the influence of the Russian war, and the Ukrainian post-colonial trend came to an end, beginning the process of Ukraine's withdrawal from the sphere of Russia's influence. In this process, Ukraine has undergone great political and economic hardships.

The Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism" conducted research on "Scenarios and Trends for 2021: Foreign Policy." Its experts consider that in order to realize foreign policy successfully, Ukraine should take into account the situation in the European Union, the USA, the Russian Federation, China, and pay strict attention to the situation with COVID-19 pandemics (Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2021; Ukrainian Prism, 2021a; 2021b).

The evolution of Ukrainian foreign policy has brought about significant changes in its main traits, including:

1. In many cases, Ukraine has become the subject of foreign policy instead of being its object, although some global experts have suggested that Ukraine lost its subjectivity and surrendered to

external control of the USA and Great Britain.

2. Ukraine abandoned its neutral “non-bloc” status and now seeks to deepen cooperation with allies outside of NATO.

3. Ukraine has declined the strategy of “balancing” and made a choice in favor of the European integration vector. The Russian military aggression has ruined the pro-Russian vector of Ukraine.

4. The principle of priority of state sovereignty protection and territorial integrity has become the major one.

5. The politics of double asymmetric integration has been replaced with the politics of European integration.

The conceptual foundations of Ukrainian foreign policy have changed in the process of Ukraine’s implementation of European and Euro-Atlantic vectors, with a focus on the ideology of Europeanization. The Russian military aggression has influenced changes in Ukrainian foreign policy, and the main tasks of Ukrainian foreign policy now include:

- Ending the Russian war and achieving peace;
- International legitimization of democratic political regime in Ukraine;
- Promoting economic interests of Ukraine in European and other global markets;
- Modernization of the country based on the European model of development;
- Ukraine’s integration into the European civilization space.

However, the Russian military aggression has led to dire impacts that have influenced the foreign policy of Ukraine. The loss of territorial integrity will be difficult to restore in the medium-term perspective. An enclave with a dominant radical Russian identity and perception of Ukraine as an enemy has been established in the Donbass region, which is not under the control of the Ukrainian authorities. This enclave will incite persistent separatist moods and pose a constant and convincing threat to the national security of Ukraine. Nowadays, as a result of hybrid warfare, Russia remains a significant military threat to Ukraine, which has resulted in increased defense spending and militarization of the national economy at the cost of social development programs.

Deglobalization (Glocalization, Regionalization, Non-polarity) and Ukraine

As a rule, deglobalization is defined as a reduction of interdependence among components of the system of international relations, particularly among countries, and the formation of local centers of power that replace movement towards global management of world development (Hillebrand, 2010).

During Ukraine’s years of independence, the country has changed the major vectors of its foreign policy development several times, including multi-vector policy (trusting everyone and declaring good neighborly relations), orientation towards reliance on the Russian Federation and CIS countries (establishing a single economic space), European integration (interrupted by the events of 2013-2014), and Euro-Atlantic direction (declaring accession to NATO).

However, Ukraine faces challenges in achieving the main objective of its foreign policy, European integration, which was chosen as a social innovative ideal of global transformations (Skoliatynskyi, 2017). Crisis phenomena such as Brexit and ambiguous relations between the EU and Poland, which marked further globalization crisis. In Ukraine, the Russian aggression and establishment of enclaves for territorial expansion in eastern Ukraine and in Crimea have also hindered Ukraine’s integration into the EU.

Without a clear perspective of Ukraine's entry into the European Community in the short term, the Ukrainian political elite will have to review the main directions of foreign policy and focus on joining regional centers of power. Turkey provides an instructive example of a fundamental change in its foreign policy vector. For a long period of time, Turkey made efforts to gain membership in the EU, but now, having established powerful economic, scientific, technological, and military potentials, Turkey has become a regional power with global ambitions (Vorotiuk, 2020). Turkish President R.T. Erdogan has stated in his speech to fellow party members (2021) that the country has turned from restricted regional leadership to expanding its leadership at a global scale (Bastion TV, 2021).

Thus, in the global space, there are centrifugal tendencies manifested in the megatrend of "decentralization". This includes a significant number of regional centers of power, the establishment of horizontal interactions (instead of a clear vertical hierarchy and focus on the hegemon), destandardization of national interest protection, etc. These phenomena have been catalyzed by the global functioning of the information network system, digitalization of the world with anarchic network space and no power hegemony, where the need for equal subjects has been established, as Ukrainian Professor Anatolii Halchynskyi emphasized (Skoliatynskyi, 2017). Analyzing the system of international relations, he draws attention to its non-polarity, which means the equal responsibility of every component of the global order for the fate of the planet.

Thus, the global process continues its algorithm of existence under new circumstances with the establishment of a significant number of regional communities and regional integration, where any country can become an equal partner in international relationships.

International relations, as a race for the leader, has exhausted its format. The withdrawal of the USA from the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement under the presidency of D. Trump in 2018, and the subsequent bilateral agreements signed with each of the 11 member countries, conveyed a clear message (Ukrainska Pravda, 2018). The security pact AUKUS, announced in September 2021, which includes the USA, the United Kingdom, and Australia, became an awkward wake-up call for the European Union and eliminated French participation in the agreement (Ukrinform, 2023).

Outcome 2. Taking into consideration the modern trends in the modification of the global space from great power to "equal partners," it is obvious that the time for further European centralization is overdue. It is highly probable that a new multi-functional and multi-level system will be established, within which member countries will be able to promote their political, socio-economic, cultural, and other interests, while the integration politics of the European Union will be in the logic of a disappearing state (Skoliatynskyi, 2017).

The modern European and global structural matrix is at the stage of transformation, which provides a chance for Ukraine to become an integral political-economic part and an example of adaptability to the risks of the fourth industrial revolution (Revolution 4.0). Under such circumstances, the implementation of foreign policy should be based on conditions of self-sufficiency, increasing power (economic, military, scientific and technical, demographic), and a balanced strategy of foreign policy.

It should be mentioned that a number of Ukrainian experts continued working on the Concept of foreign policy of Ukraine for two years (2019-2020). As a result, they determined effective guidance concerning priorities in the foreign policy of the country in the medium-term perspective till 2030: developing principles of relations with the Russian Federation, further attempts in search for international partners to build Ukraine's resilience to Russian aggression, evolution of integration with the EU and NATO, enhanced international cooperation covering all the continents, promoting economic and trade interests of Ukraine in the world, and formation of a positive image of the country (Haber et al., 2020). Foreign policy is a crucial component of state politics and is based on factors affecting power, such

as developed economics, scientific, technical and educational sectors, established political elite, and the mentality of the people. It provides a credible basis for the appropriate place of the country in the international hierarchy. Under the conditions mentioned above, foreign policy has an active or passive character, protects national and state interests, or is in the wake of global powers.

The Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” has worked on analyzing the foreign policy of Ukraine in 50 areas (geographical and thematic) for several years in a row (five). The overall score for Ukraine’s activity on the foreign policy arena consistently equals “4-” (or “3+”), Ukrainian Prism: Foreign Policy 2020, 2021, indicating mediocre efficacy of Ukrainian foreign policy and therefore, its rigidity and lack of strategic thinking (Ukrainian Prism, 2021a; 2021b).

On this point, Razumkov Centre (2021) indicates that they do not observe any significant changes in Ukrainian activity in the foreign policy arena in general. Relations with partner countries are characterized by inertial processes, which result in an inability to localize the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, an ongoing conflict with Hungary, and a freeze in relations with Belarus. The achievements of Ukrainian foreign policy include the promotion of the country in European and Euro-Atlantic areas, improving relations with Poland, and resetting cooperation with Moldova.

Conclusion

Appealing to the megatrends of modern global development, “globalization” and “deglobalization,” we claim that Ukrainian foreign policy achieved its maximum in line with the first (globalization) trend. However, European integration has been “put on hold” by our European partners, but there is a high probability of joining NATO, and these steps are reflected in the Constitution of Ukraine. We should mention that the European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine was accompanied by various constraints, such as the military aggression of the Russian Federation and hybrid warfare (which includes propaganda, information and diplomatic pressure, cyber warfare, etc.).

Furthermore, according to experts, the overall assessment of Ukrainian foreign policy in recent years turned out to be inertial and lacking in any significant changes (the overall score is “4-”, “3+”). Consequently, it is obvious that there is an urgent need to correlate foreign policy, taking into account the trend of deglobalization of the global space and the establishment of new regional powers (Turkey, Japan, and India in the future).

We consider it essential to equip the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine with a “new discourse” and a new style of diplomacy. To pursue a policy of “no problems” with neighboring countries, especially with Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Moldova. To focus the government’s attention on the economic development of the country, which is an integral component of the power of the state, resulting in influence on its international subjectivity. To make efforts to transform the international image of Ukraine as a strong “middle” state. To identify new guidelines (regional powers) on establishing deepening partnerships and to establish our own geopolitical concept and strategy.

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Biographies

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Authorship and Level of Contribution

Vadym Markitantov contributed to the conceptualization of the research, literature review, and analysis of the megatrends of global development.

Olga Vinnichuk contributed to the formulation of research objectives, research methodology, data analysis, and interpretation.

Tetiana Grubi contributed to the discussion of the results and the conceptualization of the conclusions.

Oleksandr Rybshchun contributed to the review of the literature, analysis of the Ukrainian foreign policy, and policy implications.

Vasyl Chabanov contributed to the discussion of the results, identification of the limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

All authors were involved in the writing, editing, and review of the manuscript and approved the final version.

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