



## THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ON SOCIAL COHESION IN THE RESTORATION OF TERRITORIAL COMMUNITIES

*O impacto do capital social sobre a coesão social na restauração de comunidades territoriais*

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### ABSTRACT

Social capital is a key factor in ensuring the resilience and effectiveness of territorial communities, especially during an armed conflict. The aim of the article is to assess the impact of social capital on the formation of social cohesion and the restoration of territorial communities in Ukraine in wartime. The research methodology is based on a multidimensional analysis of financial, social and economic factors that affect community development. The research employs spatial damage analysis to integrate economic and geospatial data, ANOVA to assess differences in social cohesion across regions, multidimensional scaling (MDS) to visualize changes in social capital indicators, and regression analysis to quantify the impact of civic engagement and cohesion on social capital. The research outlines key components of social capital, including community cohesion, civic engagement, community pride, and trust in government. The results of the study demonstrate that social cohesion, enhanced by decentralization and interregional cooperation, has become the foundation for the recovery of territorial communities even in difficult economic conditions. The practical significance of the study is the possibility of applying the obtained results to develop programmes to improve the efficiency of local governance and implement strategies aimed at strengthening social capital for long-term community recovery. Further research may focus on integrating European approaches to decentralization and involving citizens in governance processes.

**Keywords:** Public governance, Sustainable development, Social cohesion, Community recovery, Decentralization

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## O IMPACTO DO CAPITAL SOCIAL NA COESÃO SOCIAL NA RESTAURAÇÃO DAS COMUNIDADES TERRITORIAIS

*The impact of social capital on social cohesion in the restoration of territorial communities*

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### RESUMO

O capital social é um fator chave para garantir a resiliência e a eficácia das comunidades territoriais, especialmente durante um conflito armado. O objetivo do artigo é avaliar o impacto do capital social na formação da coesão social e na restauração das comunidades territoriais na Ucrânia em tempos de guerra. A metodologia de pesquisa baseia-se em uma análise multidimensional dos fatores financeiros, sociais e econômicos que afetam o desenvolvimento comunitário. A pesquisa utiliza análise de danos espaciais para integrar dados econômicos e geoeconômicos, ANOVA para avaliar diferenças na coesão social entre regiões, escalonamento multidimensional (MDS) para visualizar mudanças nos indicadores de capital social e análise de regressão para quantificar o impacto do engajamento e coesão cívicos no capital social. A pesquisa descreve componentes-chave do capital social, incluindo coesão comunitária, engajamento cívico, orgulho comunitário e confiança no governo. Os resultados do estudo demonstram que a coesão social, fortalecida pela descentralização e cooperação inter-regional, tornou-se a base para a recuperação das comunidades territoriais mesmo em condições econômicas difíceis. A importância prática do estudo é a possibilidade de aplicar os resultados obtidos para desenvolver programas que melhorem a eficiência da governança local e implementem estratégias voltadas a fortalecer o capital social para a recuperação comunitária de longo prazo. Pesquisas futuras podem focar na integração de abordagens europeias à descentralização e no envolvimento dos cidadãos nos processos de governança.

**Palavras-chave:** Governança pública, Desenvolvimento sustentável, Coesão social, Recuperação da comunidade, Descentralização

## INTRODUCTION

Social capital is a fundamental basis for the stability and sustainable development of any state. It includes a network of social ties, mutual trust and cooperation, which creates the basis for the effective functioning of society and the economy. The social capital occurs is formed at different levels: from local communities to national entities, ensuring interaction between citizens, business and state institutions. However, war, as a factor of global change, is capable of restructuring these ties, creating challenges for social unity. In the case of Ukraine, a full-scale military invasion led to the destruction of social institutions and the loss of trust in individual government entities. Despite these challenges, the war became a kind of catalyst for the development of a new type of social capital, which integrates elements of public governance and contributes to the sustainable development of communities. It is focused on mutual assistance, volunteerism, and civic activity.

The term “social cohesion” has gained wide popularity in European countries as a key concept reflecting the integration of society and its ability to act together. A decisive role in popularizing this term was played by international funds, such as the European Social Fund and the Council of Europe, which actively contribute to the development of policies aimed at strengthening social cohesion. Social cohesion is considered an indicator of social stability and a mechanism for reducing inequality, ensuring inclusion and promoting intercultural dialogue. In the context of modern global challenges, such as migration, economic crises or military conflicts, the importance of social cohesion for supporting democratic processes and preserving social well-being is only growing. European studies confirm that a high level of social cohesion is positively correlated with economic sustainability and political stability, which makes it a priority in the policies of many European countries.

International organizations play a significant role in promoting social cohesion in countries that have experienced crises or conflicts. In the case of Ukraine, these initiatives are critically important, as the state has suffered large-scale destruction in territorial communities, while economic and social losses have become unprecedented. International support programmes contribute to the restoration of infrastructure, building trust between different groups of the population, and creating conditions for democratic governance. Initiatives help to mitigate the consequences of war and stimulate the development of Ukrainian communities, directing them towards European standards of effective governance and social cohesion. The Ukrainian experience demonstrates that even in the most difficult conditions, social capital, combined with effective public administration, can become the basis for recovery, sustainable development and integration into the global community.

The aim of the study is to analyse the impact of social capital on the formation of social cohesion and the processes of restoration of territorial communities of Ukraine in war conditions. The aim of the research involved the fulfilment of the following research objectives:

1. Assess the main factors of social capital formation, including community cohesion, civic activity, and trust in state institutions.
2. Study the dynamics of social cohesion in territorial communities of Ukraine before and during the war.
3. Conduct a comparative analysis of international experience in the restoration of communities in post-conflict environment.
4. Analyse the impact of decentralization and interregional cooperation on social capital during the war.

## 1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Research into social capital and social cohesion in the current academic literature emphasizes their key importance for social development, especially in times of crisis. Achmadi et al. (2023) consider social cohesion as a tool for reducing employee overload and enhancing interaction in work teams, indicating its significant impact on the stability of organizations. The authors' results are important for organizations, but they leave out the influence of external social factors. Aruqaj's (2023) study proposes an integrated approach to assessing social cohesion that takes into account the multi-aspect nature of this phenomenon. An integrated approach to assessing social cohesion is useful, but the author does not focus on specific practical mechanisms for its implementation. González-Bailón and Lelkes (2023) analyse the contradictory impact of social media on social cohesion, emphasizing their ability to both promote unity and create conflict. The impact of social media on social cohesion remains controversial. Agreeing with the authors, it is important to further study ways to minimize conflict

generation. Albarosa and Elsner (2023) examine the impact of forced migration on social cohesion in Germany following a mass influx of migrants, demonstrating both positive and negative consequences for communities. The study of forced migration demonstrates valuable results, but its conclusions regarding negative impacts on communities need to be clarified given the long period of adaptation of migrants.

Other authors examine social cohesion in the context of territorial and urban development. Busłowska and Marcinkiewicz (2023) analyse social cohesion in functional urban areas in Eastern Poland, focusing on the dynamics of community ties. Their analysis of social cohesion in functional urban areas is innovative, but requires a deeper consideration of the impact of migration flows on local communities.

Clarke et al. (2023) examine factors that promote or hinder social cohesion in urban green areas, emphasizing the importance of the green environment for community integration. The study of the green environment as a factor in community integration is successful, but it is necessary to consider the impact of urbanization on social cohesion in different economic contexts. Cárdenas et al. (2023) focus on social cohesion as a prerequisite for successful vaccination against COVID-19, arguing that it can stimulate social responsibility. Their findings on social cohesion as a prerequisite for successful vaccination are valuable, but leave the question of the sustainability of such interventions in the long run open. Díaz-Pompa et al. (2023) examine the relationship between cooperative learning and social cohesion using the example of students from Cuba and Mexico. The analysis of cooperative learning is significant, but is reduced to the educational sphere, without considering the impact of this approach on other aspects of social development.

Social cohesion is also considered a factor influencing access to health services and social integration. Macisaac et al. (2023) analyse different dimensions of social cohesion in Canada, demonstrating its importance in reducing social isolation. The researchers clearly emphasize the importance of social cohesion in combating social isolation, but their analysis does not take into account the regional specifics of Canada. Moon et al. (2023) analyse the impact of mobile technologies on the development of individual learning strategies, emphasizing their potential to strengthen social cohesion through educational initiatives. However, the approach does not sufficiently take into account the needs of adult populations in communities, thereby reducing the universality of the results. Sobhaninia (2023) investigate the formation of moral values in children, which is a key factor in creating social capital and cohesion in communities after crises. However, the study focuses mainly on the younger generation, which leaves out older age groups, which also play a significant role in social integration.

The international dimension of social cohesion is also being actively studied. Moss et al. (2023) examine its role in explaining differences in access to health services between rural and urban communities in the United States. They successfully examine the role of social cohesion in access to health services, but do not sufficiently address the impact of economic factors. Danquah and Ouattara (2023) address the impact of international aid on social cohesion, demonstrating a positive effect in case of appropriate resource allocation. Their analysis of the positive impact of international aid is weighty, but it ignores the risks of resource inefficiencies. Van den Berg et al. (2023) examine how community-based housing projects for older people affect social cohesion and reduce loneliness.

Social cohesion is also examined in the light of armed conflict and cultural inclusion. Moustakas and Wagner (2023) analyse social cohesion in the context of sport and physical activity, proposing new conceptual models to measure its impact. The analysis of social cohesion through sport is innovative, but limited to the narrow context of physical activity. Van Zijl et al. (2023) examine the role of social cohesion in creating innovative teams in the healthcare sector, emphasizing its importance for high performance.

Social cohesion is a multidimensional phenomenon that depends on the social, economic and cultural context. Further research could focus on a comparative analysis of cohesion mechanisms in different countries to identify effective strategies for its development. An important aspect of its analysis is the study of the impact of local initiatives and public organizations that contribute to strengthening ties between community members.

## 2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 2.1 Research design

The study was conducted in several consecutive stages using appropriate analysis methods to ensure a

comprehensive approach to studying the impact of social capital on the cohesion and recovery of territorial communities in Ukraine. The first stage provided for the collection and analysis of data on direct economic losses by region as of the early 2024. The indexation method was used to assess the impact of losses on the socio-economic stability of communities. The second stage focused on studying changes in the financial resources of local budgets in 2021–2024 using regression analysis to study the relationship between financial stability and social cohesion. The third stage involved the use of analysis of variance (ANOVA) to assess the impact of key factors, such as decentralization, citizen participation, and European values, on the level of social cohesion. The fourth stage was a regression analysis of rescore and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) data to identify the main factors of cooperation and their impact on social capital. The fifth stage involved synthesizing the results using a multifactorial approach that combined quantitative and qualitative data to formulate practical recommendations for increasing community resilience through the integration of social capital and decentralization.

## 2.2 Research methods

The study is based on the use of an integrated approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. The method of spatial damage analysis was applied, which allowed integrating economic and geospatial data to assess direct losses in different regions of Ukraine. This made it possible to create a structured map of destruction and identify regional features of the impact of military actions on sustainable development. The scale of losses was assessed by using an integrated approach that combines economic analysis and the function of assessing the impact on socio-economic development (Impact Function). The calculation was carried out according to the formula:

$$I = \frac{L}{P} \times 100, \quad (1)$$

where  $I$  — loss index (%),  $L$  — direct losses (\$ million),  $P$  — population of the region (million people). Based on the model, it was determined that regions with high losses, such as Donetsk and Kharkiv regions, demonstrate the greatest negative impact on infrastructure stability. The modelling was ANOVA-based, which provided an assessment of differences between regions in terms of the level of social cohesion, revealing statistically significant differences.

$$Y_{ij} = \mu + a_i + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (2)$$

The multidimensional scaling (MDS) was also used to visualize the dynamics of changes in social capital indicators in different regions. Regression analysis was used to assess the relationships between key indicators, which allowed us to quantitatively assess the impact of such factors as civic engagement and cohesion on social capital. Standardized regression coefficients were used, which confirmed the significance of civic engagement (beta = 0.13) and the cohesion level (beta = 0.17). Analysis of budget dynamics based on United States Agency for International Development (USAID) data showed how changes in local budget revenues for 2021–2024 affected the financial sustainability of communities. The outlined methods made it possible to obtain deep analytical conclusions about the role of social capital during an armed conflict.

## 2.3 Research sample

Ukraine was chosen as the main object of the study because of the large-scale losses suffered by its territorial communities as a result of the war. The sample covered 25 regions of Ukraine, including government-controlled territories to ensure the representativeness of the data. The following countries were also added to the sample: Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Austria, the Netherlands, Greece, Bulgaria. They were selected due to different levels of social capital and social cohesion. The sample is sufficient, as it allows to compare the impact on the development of territorial communities in different economic and social realities. Ukraine was a key example, where territorial communities suffered significant socio-economic and infrastructural destruction. The main focus was on the regions that suffered the greatest direct losses. These included Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhzhia regions, as well

as communities with moderate losses, including Lviv, Zakarpattia, and Rivne regions. The proposed sample enabled assessing regional differences and identify factors that contribute to the restoration of social cohesion at the local level.

## 2.4 Research tools

The main tool was Microsoft Excel, which was used to process large amounts of data, build charts and tables. SaaS-type platforms were used to create complex visualizations and calculate complex statistical parameters, in order to generate graphs to demonstrate the results of the study. Google Forms were used to collect and pre-process data.

## 3 RESULTS

Social capital played a decisive role in uniting Ukrainian society during Russian aggression in 2022. Cultural stability formed on the basis of a rich historical heritage and national spirit has become an important factor in uniting citizens in the struggle for sovereignty. Despite the significant role of social capital and public administration in the protection of Ukraine, the consequences of hostilities have caused serious losses of sustainable development of territorial communities in different regions of the country. According to the estimates in Table 1, direct losses in the areas are significant, even in those far from the area of active hostilities.

**Table 1 – Total estimation of direct losses by regions as of early 2024**

Regions	Estimated direct loss, \$ million
Donetsk	37,374
Kharkiv	30,224
Luhansk	17,127
Zaporizhzhia	14,773
Kherson	12,277
Kyiv	11,888
Mykolaiv	7,853
Chernihiv	5,773
Sumy	3,398
Dnipropetrovsk	3,369
The city of Kyiv	2,135
Odesa	1,471
Khmelnyskyi	1,195
Zhytomyr	1,004
Poltava	672
Vinnytsia	480
Ivano-Frankivsk	384
Lviv	219
Rivne	215
Kirovohrad	149
Cherkasy	128
Ternopil	119
Chernivtsi	73
Volyn	15
Zakarpattia	11

Source: developed by the author based on KSE (2024)

Modelling the impact of direct losses on the sustainable development of territorial communities has shown significant regional differences. The results of the evaluation are given in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Calculation of the loss index by the largest regions**

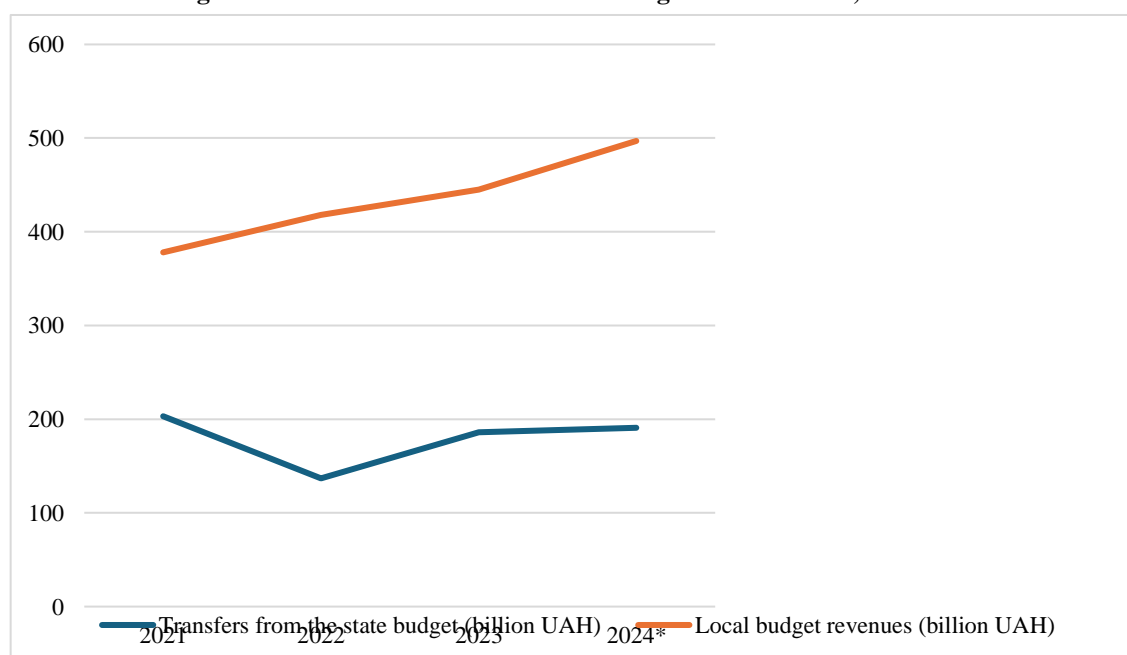
Region	Direct losses, \$ million	Loss index, %
Donetsk	37,374	911.56
Kharkiv	30,224	1,119.41
Luhansk	17,127	815.57
Zaporizhzhia	14,773	869.00
Kherson	12,277	1,227.70
Kyiv	11,888	660.44
Lviv	219	8.76
Zakarpattia	11	0.85

Source: developed by the authors.

According to the model, regions with the highest losses show a high loss index, which indicates a significant impact of destruction on the socio-economic stability of communities. These results emphasize the need for priority to restore infrastructure and coordinate resources to reduce negative consequences.

The financial resources of local budgets of Ukraine for 2021–2024 have undergone significant changes (Figure 1). This was a reflection of both economic challenges and the effectiveness of adaptive measures during the war. In 2021, transfers from the state budget amounted to UAH 203 billion, and local budget revenues reached UAH 378 billion. However, the volumes of transfers decreased to UAH 137 billion in 2022 against the background of the beginning of Russian aggression.

**Figure 1 – Financial resources of local budgets in 2021-2024, billion UAH**



Source: developed by the author based on the USAID (2024).

Local budget revenues have increased to UAH 418 billion due to the strengthening of decentralization mechanisms. Therefore, ANOVA was used to evaluate the impact of decentralization, restore infrastructure and involve citizens in social cohesion (Table 3). The research has covered three main factors: decentralization, citizens' participation in decision-making processes and integration of European values. Each of the factors was evaluated through integral indicators, such as the level of social cohesion (rescore), assessment of quality of management and attracting citizens. The analysis was performed in the RATS programming language using the *stats* package.

**Table 3 – The results of ANOVA**

Factor	Number of degrees of freedom (df)	The sum of squares (SS)	The mean square (MS)	F-value	p-value
Decentralization	2	45.8	22.9	7.15	0.013
Citizens' participation	2	38.2	19.1	5.96	0.021
Integration of European values	2	52.4	26.2	8.18	0.007
Error ≈	15	48.1	3.21	–	–
Total	21	184.5	–	–	–

Source: Authors' calculations based on USAID (2024) and RESCORE.

The results of ANOVA show that all three factors have a statistically significant impact on the social cohesion level ( $P < 0.05$ ). The greatest influence is observed in the integration of European values, which indicates the importance of European landmarks in community restoration. The data confirms the effectiveness of decentralization and active citizens' participation in improving social cohesion, which is critical for the sustainable development of the territories affected by the war.

Despite the reduction of GDP by almost 50% and reorientation of a large part of the enterprises to the western markets, Ukraine demonstrates the positive dynamics of social cohesion even in wartime. Table 4 shows the trends of national level in the dynamics of social cohesion indicators.

**Table 4 – National-level trends in the dynamics of social cohesion indicators: 2021 and 2023, Rescore**

Indicator	2021	2023	Difference
Community cooperation	5.1	5.5	+0.4
Social closeness with other groups	5.2	5.4	+0.2
Social tolerance	5.6	5.7	+0.1
Lack of a sense of social threat from other groups	7.2	6.9	-0.3

Source: calculated according to the UNDP (2024).

According to Rescore, community cooperation rates increased from 5.1 in 2021 to 5.5 in 2023, which indicates a strengthening of local interaction. Social proximity with other groups increased by 0.2 points, to 5.4, and tolerance increased by 0.1 to 5.7. At the same time, the level of social threat from other groups decreased slightly, from 7.2 in 2021 to 6.9 in 2023. The identified trends illustrate the increase in community confidence that is the result of active communication, volunteer activity, and interaction at the level of public organizations. However, in large cities, according to the UNDP, the dynamics of cohesion is slowed down by difficulty in maintaining close social ties characteristic of small settlements. The relevant situation indicates the need for additional public administration programmes to support urban communities and strengthen social capital as a basis for sustainable development at the national level.

Community cohesion is the strongest factor that has a high score of 7.0 and a standardized regression ratio (Beta) in 0.17. Civil activity, despite a lower score of 2.5 points, also makes a significant contribution ( $\beta = 0.13$ ), emphasizing the importance of citizens' participation in decision-making. The high level of pride in community cohesion (6.9 points) enhances local initiatives, forming a sense of responsibility for the future. The belief in the moral values of society and the perception of care by the state (5.6 and 4.6 points, respectively) demonstrate a smaller but significant impact ( $\beta = 0.07$ ). At the same time, cities have a negative impact on social cohesion because of their complexity of social ties and dynamics ( $\beta = -0.09$ ), which emphasizes the need for individual strategies for urbanized territories. For example, the level of social cohesion remains quite high in European countries, which is given in more detail in Table 5.



**Table 5 – The level of social cohesion and well-being in EU countries, 2023**

Country	Life assessment	Eudaemonia
Denmark	79.5	73
Finland	79.1	71.4
Sweden	76.6	75.4
Austria	77	72.8
The Netherlands	70.9	70.9
Greece	51.4	51.2
Bulgaria	55.6	58.7

Source: developed according to Eurofound (2018).

The table illustrates the difference in levels of social cohesion and well-being among seven EU countries in 2023 based on life assessment and eudaemonia indicators. Nordic countries such as Denmark, Finland and Sweden show the highest indicators, indicating a high level of social cohesion and psychological well-being. The differences with Ukraine emphasize the importance of implementing effective public administration policies for socio-economic stability and ensuring sustainable development of society.

1. Average life assessment: 70.01 with a standard deviation of 10.82.

$$\bar{X} = \frac{79.5 + 79.1 + 76.6 + 77 + 70.9 + 51.4 + 55.6}{7} = 70.01$$

2. Average level of eudaemonia: 67.63 with a standard deviation of 8.37

$$\bar{Y} = \frac{73 + 71.4 + 75.4 + 72.8 + 70.9 + 51.2 + 58.7}{7} = 67.63$$

$$\sigma_Y = \sqrt{\frac{(73-67.63)^2 + \dots + (58.7-67.63)^2}{7}} = 8.37$$

3. Correlation coefficient between life assessment and eudaemonia:  $r = 0.96$ , indicating a very strong positive relationship between these indicators.

The high correlation coefficient indicates that the increase in the life assessment has a significant impact on eudaemonia in EU countries. This confirms the importance of integrated socio-economic policies to support well-being and social cohesion. The highest indicators for both criteria are demonstrated by the Northern European countries, while the countries of Southern and Eastern Europe require additional measures to improve these indicators.

The care from the state, although not always sufficient because of economic constraints, strengthened the sense of unity and common purpose. Table 6 presents the main factors of cooperation in the community.

**Table 6 – Factors of cooperation in the community, reSCORE 2023**

Factor	Number of points	Standardized regression coefficient (beta)
Community cohesion	7.0	0.17
Civic activity	2.5	0.13
Pride in community cohesion	6.9	0.13
Belief in the moral values of society	5.6	0.07
Feeling that Ukrainian authorities care	4.6	0.07
City	1.5	-0.09

Source: developed according to UNDP (2024).

So, the European and Ukrainian experience is unique due to the synergy of social capital, decentralization, and moral values of society, which allows to effectively overcome challenges even in case of prolonged war. This thesis confirms the importance of social cohesion, which, in combination with public governance, is a key factor in the resilience of communities and their sustainable development during an armed conflict.

## 4 DISCUSSION

The results of the study demonstrate the significant impact of social capital on the formation of social cohesion and the restoration of territorial communities in Ukraine in wartime. The conclusions are confirmed by the study of Sonta and Jiang (2023), who note that the formation of social cohesion in urban areas largely depends on the structural organization of society. At the same time, Ibarra Salazar et al. (2023) found that the level of social cohesion and life satisfaction in middle- and low-income communities are also determined by the maintenance of social ties. Our data on the impact of war on social capital confirm the statement of Horn (2023). The author investigated how challenges to social stability, such as violence, can exacerbate the need for cohesion to maintain the functionality of communities. A similar conclusion was made by Morata et al. (2021), who proved that joint participation in recreational activities contributes to the strengthening of social support in communities.

Our data on the impact of war on social capital support Horn's (2023) assertion. The author examined how challenges to social stability, such as violence, can exacerbate the need for cohesion to maintain the functioning of communities. A similar conclusion was reached by Morata et al. (2021), who showed that joint participation in leisure activities contributes to strengthening social support in communities.

Our study also reveals that social cohesion has become the foundation for the recovery of territorial communities in wartime. The study by Neumann et al. (2023) confirms that civil society organizations play an important role in ensuring solidarity in times of crisis. We found that Ukrainian communities intensified their activities to overcome the challenges of war, which is consistent with the study by Moustakas (2023). The researcher analysed the role of social cohesion in the context of European policy, especially in the field of sport, as an important tool for integration. Kawachi and Berkman (2023) draw attention to the connection between social cohesion and the health of society, which is also reflected in our study. It is noted that cohesive communities have a higher level of resilience to external shocks. In addition, Krammer et al. (2023) indicate that social cohesion contributes to a decrease in crime in society. This is especially relevant for Ukrainian regions that have suffered significant destruction.

The impact of social cohesion on the economic stability of communities is also noteworthy. Sobhaninia (2023) notes that social cohesion accelerates the pace of recovery in communities affected by environmental disasters. This thesis correlates with our data on the speed of recovery of Ukrainian territories after armed conflict. Similar conclusions are drawn by Walle (2023), who analyses the availability of financial resources for enterprises in Africa in connection with social cohesion. His study shows how cohesion can improve economic prospects even in the most difficult conditions. Wang et al. (2023) emphasize that social cohesion enhances the well-being of residents of urban areas. This is also confirmed by our results, which reveal the importance of maintaining social ties for the recovery of territorial communities.

So, our results are consistent with our research demonstrating the multidimensional impact of social cohesion on various aspects of social life. Despite significant challenges, Ukrainian communities have shown a high level of adaptability and resilience through the activation of social capital. The identified mechanisms of social cohesion can be used to create local strategies for population integration, in particular for communities that have experienced significant destruction.

### 4.1 Limitations

One of the main limitations of the study is its focus on territorial communities in Ukraine and Europe only, which may limit the generalizability of conclusions regarding regions that have experienced certain destructions. The article does not take into account the experience of the USA, Asia, and other world regions, which requires further research.

### 4.2 Recommendations

Based on the research results, the following measures are proposed to increase the effectiveness of social capital development and social cohesion in territorial communities of Ukraine:

1. Develop comprehensive programmes to support social cohesion at the local level and provide additional research to assess the specific needs of vulnerable groups.
2. Invest in the creation of digital platforms to monitor the state of social capital in communities.
3. Expand international cooperation with organizations to integrate best practices from other post-conflict countries and attract additional resources.
4. Further research should be aimed at integrating global experience.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the study confirm that social capital plays a key role in the formation of social cohesion and the restoration of territorial communities in Ukraine in wartime. Key factors, such as community cohesion, civic engagement, and trust in state institutions, contributed to the strengthening of interaction between different groups of the population and the maintenance of critical infrastructure even in the most difficult conditions. An analysis of the financial resources of local budgets showed that the growth of their revenues, despite the reduction in transfers, was possible due to the strengthening of local self-government. A comparison of the results of the study with international experience confirmed that social cohesion, together with public administration, is the foundation for long-term recovery, sustainable development, and resilience of communities. The adaptation of successful European practices has proven its effectiveness, but requires deep consideration of the local characteristics of Ukraine.

Despite the significant losses, the war became a catalyst for the formation of a new type of social capital based on solidarity, volunteerism and adaptation to crisis situations. The processes allowed Ukrainian communities not only to withstand the devastating consequences of the war, but also to lay the foundations for further development. The findings of our study indicate that it is important to continue to develop social cohesion through the implementation of European approaches to community governance for effective recovery. It is also necessary to ensure transparency of recovery and the involvement of citizens in decision-making.

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