

MANAGEMENT OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN THE CONDITIONS OF MILITARY AND POLITICAL CRISES: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

GESTÃO DAS ATIVIDADES ECONÔMICAS NAS CONDIÇÕES DE CRISE MILITAR E POLÍTICA: A REGRA DA ADMINISTRAÇÃO PÚBLICA

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Abstract: The proposed article is devoted to the public administration of economic activity within the context of war and the related political crisis. The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that military conflicts continue to cause significant changes in national and international economic structures, and adaptation to these changes is an urgent task for the government. The article aims to analyze the challenges and strategies for managing economic activity within the context of the military-political crisis. The subject of the study is the public administration system in this challenging period. A set of methods is used to achieve this goal, including comparative analysis and modeling. The study shows that military and political crises require a significant restructuring of the public administration system. Compared to peacetime, the wartime period is characterized by a broader range of tasks that the public administration system solves. They include mobilizing resources, re-profiling manufacturing, stabilizing the economy, ensuring supplies, as well as maintaining social stability and transparency. The lack of flexibility in responding to these challenges can lead to catastrophic consequences. Therefore, business administration should be flexible and creative to adapt successfully to new conditions and challenges. The research findings have significant practical implications, as governments can use them to plan and implement management strategies during a crisis.

Keywords: Adaptation. Economic activity. Military-political crisis. Public administration. Public procurement. Resource mobilization. Responsible entrepreneurship.

Resumo: O artigo proposto é dedicado à administração pública da actividade económica no contexto da guerra e da crise política associada. A relevância deste tema reside no facto de os conflitos militares continuarem a provocar alterações significativas nas estruturas económicas nacionais e internacionais, sendo a adaptação a essas mudanças uma tarefa urgente para o governo. O artigo tem como objetivo analisar os desafios e estratégias de gestão da actividade económica no contexto da crise

Received: 09 Aug 2023

Accepted: 16 Nov 2023

Published: 10 Dec 2023

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político-militar. O tema do estudo é o sistema de administração pública neste período desafiador. Um conjunto de métodos é utilizado para atingir esse objetivo, incluindo análise comparativa e modelagem. O estudo mostra que as crises militares e políticas exigem uma reestruturação significativa do sistema de administração pública. Em comparação com os tempos de paz, o período de guerra é caracterizado por uma gama mais ampla de tarefas que o sistema de administração pública resolve. Incluem a mobilização de recursos, a redefinição do perfil da indústria, a estabilização da economia, a garantia do abastecimento, bem como a manutenção da estabilidade social e da transparência. A falta de flexibilidade na resposta a estes desafios pode levar a consequências catastróficas. Portanto, a administração empresarial deve ser flexível e criativa para se adaptar com sucesso às novas condições e desafios. Os resultados da investigação têm implicações práticas significativas, uma vez que os governos podem utilizá-los para planejar e implementar estratégias de gestão durante uma crise.

Palavras-chave: Adaptação. Atividade econômica. Crise político-militar. Administração pública. Procuração pública. Mobilização de recursos. Empreendedorismo responsável.

1. Introduction

The relevance of the research topic indicated in the title hardly needs any particular reasoning, given the current Ukrainian context. The military-political crisis caused by the armed aggression of the Russian Federation has had a profound impact on the national economy, mainly through the humanitarian crisis, destruction of economic infrastructure, disruption of trade relations, etc.

The war unleashed against Ukraine has far-reaching consequences for the global economy, including causing food shortages in different parts of the world. The war in Ukraine is also causing a change in international trade routes, increasing the cost of imports and reducing the volume of Ukrainian exports. As a result, both separate national economies and the global economic system as a whole suffer.

Additionally, martial law requires significant defense spending, which leads to an increase in public debt (Bourguignon & Platteau, 2018). Increased defense spending is usually accompanied by decreased spending on other sectors, such as education, healthcare, and civilian infrastructure (Brauer, 1996, p. 108). This can have long-lasting and far-reaching consequences for the economy and various spheres of social life (Brauer, 2012).

Not least, the political and economic instability caused by the war has a negative impact on investment. Recent studies show that despite significant efforts made by the Ukrainian government and partners, investors often withdraw their assets from the Ukrainian economy or refrain from new ones. This, in turn, leads to a decline in economic activity and slower economic growth (Shevtshuk, 2023). The loss of investment can have severe consequences for the economic development and growth of both Ukraine and the region as a whole.

A separate problem is the destruction of infrastructure as a result of hostilities. This dramatically complicates economic activity, leading to disruptions in production, transportation of goods, and provision of services. Finally, military conflicts have caused a massive migration of the Ukrainian population, which puts an additional burden on social infrastructure and leads to a decrease in the labor force. All of this creates significant challenges for the public administration of economic activity.

The proposed study's hypothesis assumes that the conditions for effective public administration of economic activity during peace and war often overlap. At the same time, the requirements for effective public administration of economic activity during wartime are more complicated due to the presence of specific wartime challenges.

The state is quite active in using "soft regulation" of economic activity (financial support for businesses, insurance support for businesses through insurance of relevant risks, public procurement, etc.). In recent years, due to the involvement of business entities in the public procurement market, the state has begun to set additional requirements for the relevant participants with no direct connection to the price component of the offer. Thus, for several years now, Ukraine has stipulated that only legal entities that have anti-corruption programs or an authorized person to implement an anti-corruption program may participate in public procurement procedures if the value of the goods, service (services) or works is equal to or exceeds UAH 20 million (including for a separate lot). This requirement does not apply to non-resident legal entities. Without an anti-corruption program or an authorized person to implement such a program, a given participating company will be denied participation in procurement procedures. At present, it is difficult to measure the impact of anti-corruption programs on the development of public tenders and the "cleansing" of this area from negative phenomena, including due to the full-scale invasion of Russia. However, it is certainly possible to talk about a positive impact. The state influences economic activity, including its internal part, and encourages creating an environment for fair business development and transparent attraction of external financing (through the public procurement tool). Based on both Ukraine's commitments to implement certain international documents and to improve the business environment, it is advisable to consider the creation of internal company policies. These policies will at least declare the position of the business as a socially responsible one and, at most, create the preconditions for its development based on the relevant principles. The state will get a full-fledged partner in the face of business. This partner will be ready to attract its resources for community development and support large-scale social initiatives of the government or local authorities.

The proposed article analyzes the challenges faced by the public administration of economic activity in peacetime and the context of a military-political crisis. We will start with some terminological clarifications, then analyze the conditions for effective public administration of economic activity in general. We will try to explain how the impact of the military-political crisis transforms such conditions. The conclusions represent the results of testing the abovementioned hypothesis.

2. Terminological clarification

The concept of "public administration" has long been in scientific circulation among experts in the field of economics and law. At the same time, the doctrinal nature of this term inevitably leads to its interpretive variability, which may hinder scientific research in this area. In this regard, the relevant concept requires interpretation.

For example, some researchers assume that public administration is an externally oriented activity of authorized entities aimed at making and implementing political decisions (Melnik, 2013). Meanwhile, others believe that it is an externally organized public service activity (Yakovlev, 2016; Skvirskii, 2015). The characterized approaches to the definition of public administration have in common the part that states the external nature of management. It implies that leadership is fundamentally impossible without an object to which it is directed. In this focus, the external orientation of any management can be traced, including the one that is the subject of this study.

Public management of economic activity in the context of the proposed article can be defined as the activities of state and local authorities aimed at regulating and controlling economic processes in a country or a particular region. This process is known to be carried out with the help of various instruments, such as legislation, state regulation, control, and provision of public services. The task of public administration of economic activity is to create conditions for effective economic development, maintain stability, protect the interests of consumers, and ensure fair distribution of resources in a socially oriented economy.

3. Conditions for effective public administration of economic activity: Literature Review

3.1. Quality of legislation

High-quality legislation plays a critical role in the effective public administration of economic activities, as it creates the structure and framework for various economic endeavors. Primarily, the legislation ensures predictability by establishing clear rules for the functioning of the economy (Obolenskii, 2013). It helps all market participants understand what actions are legal and what are not, instilling confidence in businesses and promoting long-term planning and investment (Nyitrai, 2017, p. 87, 88).

High-quality legislation also regulates market relations, including consumer protection, competition policy, corporate governance, etc. This fosters a level playing field for all market participants, contributing to fairness and efficiency in economic processes (Polychroniou et al., 2016). In the context of stimulating economic development, sound legislation can create a conducive environment for innovation, investment, and property rights protection. Laws safeguarding intellectual property and incentivizing research and development can stimulate innovation and technological progress (Sheremirov & Spirovska, 2022).

As noted by Souters (2020), "In resolving conflicts and disputes that may arise in economic activities, legislation plays a decisive role" (p. 2). Mechanisms provided by legislation for dispute resolution ensure conflicts are resolved fairly and transparently, fostering stability and trust in the system (Zagorodniuk, 2012, p. 184, 185).

Finally, as highlighted by Shereminov and Spirovska (2022), legislation can also serve as a means of protecting social interests, such as regulating labor, environmental protection, and ensuring social justice. It helps ensure that economic development goes hand in hand with social progress and contributes to overall stable and sustainable societal development.

3.2. Transparency and openness

Transparency and openness are fundamental principles of effective public administration of economic activity (Moroz, 2013, p. 42-43). Under these conditions, government activities become understandable and accessible to citizens, the business community, the media, and other institutions and organizations (Mikolyuk, 2022).

According to Melis et al. (2007), "transparency ensures constant control over the actions of the government, making it accountable to the public" (p. 360). Transparency also improves the efficiency of public administration by reducing the possibility of corruption and misuse of public resources. When the authorities are obliged to disclose information about their actions, it becomes more difficult for them to abuse their position.

On the other hand, openness means the availability of information about government activities to citizens (Mikolyuk, 2022). An open government actively provides access to information and cooperates with the public. This can help create conditions for public participation in decision-making processes, strengthening democracy and increasing the legitimacy of government decisions. In addition, when the government is open, it stimulates innovation by allowing businesses, academic institutions, civil society organizations, and other parties to use open data to create new products, services, or research (Massoud & Magee. 2012).

Thus, transparency and openness are essential factors for effective public management of economic activity, as they ensure accountability, efficiency, public participation, and innovation.

3.3. Responsibility

Responsibility is an essential component of effective public administration of economic activity. It is critical to ensure high standards of professionalism, integrity, and ethics among civil servants and governing bodies. Responsibility stimulates transparency and regular monitoring of government activities. They allow us to identify and correct shortcomings, errors, or abuses (Mamonov, 2012). As Leshchenko notes, it can lead to more efficient use of resources and strengthen citizens' trust in the government (Leshchenko, 2015, p. 115, 116).

In addition, responsibility encourages the government to better consider the interests of citizens and businesses in its decisions (Lazor, 2015). It can stimulate public participation in decision-making processes, improving the quality and legitimacy of policies. Responsibility can also foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the government. Through reporting and evaluation processes, the government can analyze its performance, identify its weaknesses, and find ways to address them (Hu, 2019). Finally, as Dargay rightly points out, responsibility promotes better coordination and cooperation between different sectors and levels of government, as each government agency is held accountable for its actions and results (Dargay, 2019, p. 21). This can lead to a more harmonious and holistic approach to managing economic activities.

Therefore, responsibility is an essential factor in ensuring effective public management of economic activities, as it provides high standards of governance, stimulates public participation, promotes continuous improvement, and ensures coordination and cooperation between different branches of government.

3.4. Efficiency and effectiveness

Efficiency and effectiveness are essential criteria that determine the success of public management of economic activities (Griciak, 2010). They reflect the ability of the government to achieve desired goals and results with minimal expenditure of resources, such as time, money, and human capital.

"Efficiency is measured by," Delphgaya and Doer point out, "how well a government uses its resources to achieve its goals" (Delphgaya, 2010, p. 29). Thus, when a government uses its resources efficiently, it can provide more and better services at a lower cost, which is vital for

maintaining economic stability and growth. Efficiency is measured by the impact of government activities on achieving desired outcomes. This means that the government should be able to demonstrate that its actions lead to positive changes, such as improved living standards, economic growth, and social justice (Bodrov, 2016). Efficiency and effectiveness also ensure transparency and openness in government operations (Jinmin & Lijun, 2017). When the government can demonstrate that it uses resources efficiently and achieves desired results, it increases public trust and encourages public participation in decision-making processes.

In general, efficiency and effectiveness are essential mechanisms for ensuring high governance standards, which leads to a better understanding and performance of public functions, and increases citizens' trust in government.

3.5. Strategic planning

Strategic planning plays an essential role in public management of economic activity. It is a process of identifying priority areas of activity, setting goals, and formulating strategies to achieve these goals. It serves as a basis for developing specific plans, programs, and initiatives that will be put into practice.

Strategic planning helps public institutions and organizations focus on what is really important and allocate their resources accordingly. It also provides an opportunity to ensure that different areas of activity are linked and aligned with overall goals and strategies. Strategic planning also increases the transparency and openness of public administration. It involves the active participation of stakeholders, including the public, in the decision-making process (Obolenskii, 2013). This allows us to take into account different points of view and choose the best strategies. Finally, strategic planning contributes to the effectiveness of public administration. It will enable monitoring and evaluating the impact of various actions and policies, adjusting them per the results obtained, ultimately increasing the efficiency of governance.

Hence, strategic planning is a key element of effective public administration. It allows for better organization of work, openness and transparency, public involvement in decision-making, and continuous improvement of activities in line with the results achieved.

3.6. Professionalism and competence of the administrative staff

The professionalism and competence of the management apparatus play a crucial role in the effective public management of economic activity. Professionalism ensures a high level of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for implementing management functions. It also includes

the maintenance of norms, values, and standards of behavior that ensure reliability, objectivity, and commitment to high-quality work.

The competence of administrative staff includes technical knowledge and skills, as well as critical thinking, decision-making, leadership, communication, and conflict resolution. Competent managers can adapt to changes, predict trends, and identify the most effective strategies to achieve goals. Responsible, skilled, and professional public administrators can improve the quality of decision-making, increase public trust, and increase productivity and efficiency. They will be able to understand and use various management tools and techniques, communicate effectively with different stakeholder groups, and manage complex and changing situations.

The professionalism and competence of the administrative staff are thus essential factors that contribute to the effectiveness of public management of economic activity. They determine the ability of the public sector to achieve its goals, serve the public interest, and provide high-quality services.

3.7. Involvement of the public in the decision-making process

It is an essential part of effective public administration of economic activity. Such involvement provides a deeper understanding of people's needs, priorities, and challenges and ensures that the most pressing issues are addressed.

First of all, public involvement contributes to greater transparency and objectivity in governance, as the public becomes a witness and participant in the decision-making process. This increases trust in government agencies and improves their reputation. Furthermore, public involvement contributes to understanding people's real needs and problems. It provides a more thorough understanding of the situation on the ground and helps to avoid mistakes and misunderstandings when formulating policies and strategies. Finally, public involvement supports a sense of respect for human dignity. When people feel that their voices are heard, they are more likely to comply with rules and policies, participate in their implementation, and monitor them.

Thus, public involvement in decision-making is an essential aspect of good public administration. It contributes to greater transparency, openness, and trust, as well as improves the quality and relevance of decisions.

4. Challenges of the military-political crisis to the public administration of economic activity

While the management of economic activity, in particular, performed by public authorities, can be considered sufficiently studied in both Ukrainian and foreign literature (as indirectly proved by the above analysis), it is hardly fair to say that the same close attention has been paid to the understanding of this phenomenon during the war. The reasons for this are apparent, since public administration of economic activity in peacetime, according to Caruso and Di Domizio, "is analyzed in the context of a more or less stable and discrete system of determinants" (Domizio, 2016, p. 536). However, wartime introduces many "variables" (situationally determined factors) into the subject. Some hostilities are not like others: for example, the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and its citizens is characterized by an unprecedented scale of destruction of civilian infrastructure, air strikes on civilians, and many other inhuman actions that take this war beyond the traditional paradigm of warfare. *In other words, the public administration theory of economic activity during peacetime is not sufficiently suitable for solving wartime issues.*

Martial law poses several new and still poorly understood issues for the public administration of economic activity. In particular, according to Brauner, there is a need to mobilize resources during the war. This is a great challenge for the public administration of economic activity (Brauner, 2012). It is about the most efficient attraction and use of all possible human, material, financial, and informational resources. These resources are used to support military operations and ensure stability on the domestic front (Conflict Management, 2009).

The challenge is to "balance the needs of the military and civilian sectors" (Gyarmati, 2015, p. 296). At the same time, as Huang argues, "excessive focus on military needs may lead to neglect of civilian needs, which in turn may cause social problems and instability" (Huang, 2012, p. 232). At the same time, it is essential to ensure that resources are mobilized quickly and flexibly and used effectively. Abuse, corruption, or lack of coordination can lead to wastage of resources or reduced efficiency of their use (Military Management: Effects-Based Approach, 2020). Also, the mobilization of resources in wartime requires careful planning and strategic management. It can be a challenge in the unpredictability and instability that accompany military conflicts (Military Management: Privatization, 2020).

Another challenge during the war is the effective re-profiling of production during the war. This process involves the reorientation of civilian production facilities to the manufacturing of military products or goods needed for military purposes or to support the livelihoods of the population under martial law. However, the problem is that not all civilian manufacturing facilities can be easily or quickly converted to military production. This may require special equipment,

technologies, or skills that are not always available. In addition, the conversion of manufacturing facilities can take time and require significant investment.

Another challenge is the need to strike a balance between the production of military and civilian goods. An excessive concentration on military production can lead to a shortage of essential goods and services for the population. This can cause social problems and destabilize the situation in the country. Additionally, public authorities should decide which enterprises to re-profile, considering their specialization, location, potential for re-profiling, and possible social and economic consequences for the employees of these enterprises and their families.

The issue of stabilizing the economy during the war is also noteworthy. This, in turn, is a critical challenge for the public administration of economic activity. According to Smith, "A military conflict can lead to significant economic disturbances that can disrupt the normal functioning of the market, cause inflation, currency instability, increased unemployment, reduced production, reduced investment, etc." (Smith, 2009, p. 174). The war can affect the entire spectrum of economic activity, including production, trade, investment, employment, and consumption. All these require careful planning and response by public administration to ensure economic stabilization and recovery after the war.

Public authorities have to address several issues simultaneously, for example:

- how to finance military spending;
- how to ensure the necessary level of living standards for the population;
- how to maintain production and economic performance.

It is also vital to ensure macroeconomic stability, including controlling inflation and stabilizing the exchange rate. These require careful planning, efficient allocation of resources, skillful budget management, and high flexibility in responding to rapidly changing circumstances. In addition, it is necessary to have a proper monitoring and evaluation mechanism in place to identify issues on time and implement corrective measures.

Another challenge is related to the economy's stabilization, namely, supply chain management (Military Management: Effects-Based Approach, 2020). It means not only providing the army with the necessary supplies but also making sure that the civilian population receives the necessary goods and services.

The first thing to consider is the need for the "military machine" (Military Management: Effects-Based Approach, 2020). Military operations require significant resources, including weapons, ammunition, transportation, fuel, food, medical equipment, etc. In the case of continuous war, these needs may increase significantly, jeopardizing the country's ability to meet

its military needs. The second thing to consider is the provision of supplies for the civilian population. The war can disrupt trade routes, reduce production capacity, and lead to shortages of goods. At the same time, the demand for some goods and services may increase, such as medical services, food, and energy. The governments (including in Ukraine) use various strategies to cope with this challenge, including price regulation, rationing, stimulating the production of necessary goods, creating strategic reserves, etc. These require adequate planning, coordination, and control, which are essential functions of public administration.

In addition to all the above, maintaining social stability during wartime is also a key challenge for the public administration of economic activity. The war can lead to significant social discord, including forced displacement of people, destruction of infrastructure, increased poverty and unemployment, and violations of fundamental rights and freedoms. All these factors can provoke social protests, crime, and political instability, which further complicates the situation. In such circumstances, administering business activities requires a balanced approach that simultaneously ensures military needs and the welfare of the civilian population. It may include measures such as social benefits, employment support, access to basic services (education, healthcare, housing), human rights protection, and support for social dialogue.

It is also essential to maintain economic stability to ensure the necessary conditions for the economy to function. This may include stimulating production, regulating prices, ensuring currency stability, and fighting inflation. In general, maintaining social stability in times of war requires effective administration that addresses both military and civilian needs, seeks to minimize the negative impact of war on society and the economy, and actively engages the public in decision-making.

The war often is accompanied by increased secrecy, confidentiality, and centralization of power. It can lead to limited transparency of governance and deterioration of control over the use of resources. This, in turn, can contribute to increased corruption, resource mismanagement, social tensions, and destabilization.

The public administration should be challenged to balance the need to respond to the military threat with the preservation of basic principles of democratic governance, including transparency and control. It may involve the development of appropriate mechanisms to control the use of resources, ensure transparency of decisions and actions, and raise public awareness and involvement in the decision-making process.

These mechanisms may include regular reporting on the use of resources, independent audits, public consultations, public involvement in monitoring the activities of governing bodies,

etc. It is also vital to ensure compliance with legislation, rules, and procedures, even during the war, to prevent abuse and corruption. Thereby, maintaining transparency and control in the administration of economic activities during the war is an important prerequisite for effective public administration, stability, and public trust in the state.

5. Conclusions

Public administration of economic activity is different during peace and war. These differences are due to the specifics of the situation and the changed needs of society. In peacetime, the main goal of public administration includes:

- ensuring a stable economic situation;
- promoting economic growth and development;
- creating favorable conditions for business, investment, and job provision.

In addition, it focuses on maintaining social security, preserving the environment, and regulating production processes. However, during a war or military conflict, the priorities of public administration change. The main task here is to ensure national security and maintain the military potential of the state. It may include mobilization of resources, re-profiling of production for military needs, and search for alternative solutions to ensure the normal life of society during the war. It is also vital to ensure the economy's stability and maintain social peace.

The state can use existing tools to promote responsible entrepreneurship development, for example, through a public procurement process. For example, it is advisable to provide legislatively that only companies (business entities) with a responsible business development program (policy) (or other local program document) or a corporate social responsibility program may participate in certain procurement procedures (for example, by setting a value threshold for goods, services or works).

At the same time, the state's role in the economy increases significantly during the war. For example, the state can establish control over key sectors of the economy that are necessary for warfare. This may include weapons production, supplies, transportation, communications, etc. The main private companies can be nationalized or forced to switch to the production of military products.

The flexibility and rapid response to changes during the war are also critical. For example, the state should be ready to quickly reallocate resources or change tactics depending on the

situation on the military front. For example, this may include rapidly re-profiling production, mobilizing the workforce, or changing transportation logistics.

At the same time, the state should remain responsible to its citizens. It includes providing social services, supporting people affected by the war, and keeping the public informed about the situation.

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