

# ASSESSMENT OF THE DANGER OF GLORIFICATION OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE AND ITS PARTICIPANTS: SOCIAL-LEGAL, ECONOMIC AND CRIMINOLOGICAL ANALYSIS\*

Vladyslava Batyrgareieva<sup>1</sup>, Nataliia Netesa<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract.** Glorification of the enemy during wartime is one of the most dangerous social phenomena threatening the existence of the state. It indicates a lack of national unity in defending the country's independence and creates favourable conditions for the enemy in the disputed territories, as well as a basis for collaboration and state treason. The purpose of this article is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the phenomenon of glorification of the Russian aggression against Ukraine and its participants, to examine its socio-legal, economic and criminological dimensions, and to develop an effective prevention model. The research methodology is based on a systematic approach, whereby empirical data on this phenomenon is meticulously analysed using a variety of scientific tools, including systemic-structural, formal-logical, analytical, synthetic, comparative, statistical, and specific sociological methods. The analysis of glorification from a social-legal perspective reveals the absence of a methodology to quantify the value of losses related to statehood and national identity, which are direct consequences of glorification. From an economic standpoint, the assessment of the impact of glorification encompasses both direct and indirect costs, including judicial expenses and the maintenance of convicts, which are estimated to amount to approximately 1 million USD per year. The criminological evaluation examines the motivations of those who glorify criminal acts and the channels through which they disseminate harmful ideas. Social networks and messengers have been identified as the primary mediums through which such ideas are propagated, thereby posing a threat of widespread dissemination of hostile ideologies. The conclusion emphasises the necessity of concentrating countermeasures on the utilisation of information technologies and the reinforcement of information awareness and resilience within Ukrainian society and the state.

**Keywords:** armed aggression, glorification, economic damage, criminal offence, hybrid warfare, information space, price of glorification of the aggressor, propaganda, hostile ideology.

**JEL Classification:** K14, K42

## 1. Introduction

One of the most powerful emotions that can captivate an individual or a group of people is associated with the glorification of someone or something. This is characterised by feelings of pride, deep reverence, respect, or admiration for certain individuals, groups of people, images, events, phenomena, ideas, symbols, etc. This may be particularly associated with

achievements, heroic deeds, or significant victories that are meaningful factors for the individual or group in question. Accordingly, the nature of this emotion is typified by profound and intense experiences, analogous to those evoked by love, anger, or hatred. In the context of socio-political conflicts and wars, emotions and moods that arise from glorification can exert a considerable influence on public opinion,

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<sup>1</sup> Academician Stashis Scientific Research Institute for the Study of Crime Problems, National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine (*corresponding author*)  
E-mail: [vladis2229@ukr.net](mailto:vladis2229@ukr.net)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3879-2237>

<sup>2</sup> Academician Stashis Scientific Research Institute for the Study of Crime Problems, National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine  
E-mail: [netesa.natalia83@gmail.com](mailto:netesa.natalia83@gmail.com)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0567-4296>



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individual conduct, and collective actions. It is important to note that their effect is greatly amplified when it comes to new generation wars, especially hybrid wars, which are increasingly used in the 21st century (Bachmann, Gunneriusson, 2015; Hoffman, 2007; Freier, 2007; Hammes, 2006; Murray, Mansoor, 2012; Davis, 2013; Nye, 2004; Schneier, 2015; Brown, 2003), where the informational space, which turns out to be the most important component in the context of physical confrontation, is used by one of the parties to the conflict as an arena for glorifying the enemy and the enemy's actions, as a way of emphasising exclusively positive attitudes towards the "recipient", of exalting the recipient's qualities, ideas, etc. It is also possible, so to speak, that all parties to the conflict will mutually glorify the representatives and actions of the opposing sides.

In the legal field, this phenomenon (the glorification of the enemy and the enemy's actions) today has a specific definition – "glorification". This term comes from the Latin word '*glorificatio*', which means praise, acclaim, glorification; enthusiastic praise; singing dithyrambs, eulogies (Glorification). This word is used by scholars to describe and reveal the peculiarities of the process of glorification of certain events and persons in history related to armed conflicts. However, the use of this word is not excluded outside of military confrontation, for example to denote a particular attitude of society towards any person glorified by the Church, or in the politics of leadership, where a leader is established as an unquestionable authority. In any case, this refers to the dual nature of the glorification phenomenon, where the positive rhetoric of the latter, designed to create a favourable background for assessing events, ideas, as well as actions and activities of a person as a member of a particular society, can, under certain circumstances, change its vector to a diametrically opposite one. Thus, while the glorification of the heroic actions of one's own people raises morale, cohesion and the will to win, the glorification of the enemy's actions undermines this spirit.

It is therefore imperative to identify and acknowledge the most dangerous forms of glorification, which can be defined as socially detrimental expressions and actions associated with the glorification of the enemy during military conflicts. These forms of glorification have become increasingly prevalent in the 21st century, necessitating a critical examination of their implications. The social danger of such glorification is most pronounced when it serves to foster positive sentiments towards the enemy among the population of territories that the enemy is attempting to seize. Furthermore, it represents a lack of unity among the people in defending their country's independence. Ukraine was confronted with precisely such facts in the defence of its sovereignty after

Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine. All this is capable of creating a morally and psychologically oppressive atmosphere of despair and distorting the true nature and course of events currently taking place on Ukrainian soil, or even interfering with the historical memory of the Ukrainian people, who have been fighting for their independence and self-reliance for centuries (Batyrhareieva, 2022, p. 41).

The realisation that glorifying the enemy could prove dangerous led to the introduction of a new norm in the Criminal Code of Ukraine. This norm, which came into force in March 2022, prohibits justifying, recognising as lawful, or denying the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and glorifying its participants. This amendment to the legislation on criminal liability was introduced by the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Strengthen Criminal Liability for Production and Distribution of Prohibited Information Products" dated March 3, 2022, No. 2110-IX (The Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Strengthen Criminal Liability for Production and Distribution of Prohibited Information Products").

The *purpose of this article* is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the phenomenon of glorification of Russian aggression against Ukraine and its participants through the lens of its numerous consequences, which manifest themselves simultaneously in at least several areas – socio-legal, economic, criminological and others, with the aim of proposing a model for the prevention of this dangerous phenomenon for the unity of the Ukrainian nation.

The *methodological basis* of this study is a systematic approach to uncovering the nature of the phenomenon of glorification of the enemy and assessing its numerous consequences (especially in monetary terms). In this approach, empirically obtained primary data on the phenomenon are thoroughly analysed using tools developed within the framework of materialist dialectical theory. These tools include system-structural, formal-logical, analytical, synthetic, comparative, statistical and specific sociological methods.

The study was conducted from August 2023 to June 2024. The source base of the study includes the following: 1) official statistical information from the Department for Organisational Support of the Unified Register of Pre-trial Investigations and Information and Analytical Work of the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Centre for Countering Disinformation under the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, as well as materials from fact-checking organisations (StopFake, VoxUkraine, Slovo i Dilo, Detector Media);

2) information contained in the verdicts published on the official platform of the Unified State Register of Court Decisions from March 2022 to February 2024; 3) data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine and sectoral statistics for the period 2022 – first half of 2024; 4) mapping, which gives, in particular, an idea of the reaction of law enforcement agencies to cases of glorification; 5) expert opinions of specialists of the Security Service of Ukraine, the National Police of Ukraine, and Ukrainian judges; 6) materials from Internet resources and mobile communications, including videos on Ukrainian media platforms, information from online forums where relevant issues are discussed, as well as data from social networks, various communicators and applications; 7) the results of anonymous surveys of ordinary citizens from different regions of Ukraine, including people displaced from the temporarily occupied territories, as well as monographic interviews with people who lived under occupation; 8) scientific publications by domestic and foreign scholars.

The survey materials and analysis of judicial practices were processed using descriptive statistics tools. The infographic was created using Adobe Photoshop CS6 and QuickMap 2.2 software. Additionally, automated data collection from social media was employed during the research, processed using reproducible research technology. We used analytical platform, CrimeDataLab, which allows for the integration and visualization of statistical data on crime prevention in Ukraine (Karchevskiy, 2022, 2023).

## **2. The Current Status and Forecast of Further Development of the Criminal Phenomenon of Enemy Glorification in Ukraine**

The initial representation of this criminogenic phenomenon is provided by the official statistical data, which determines the specific weight and, consequently, the pressure of the analysed phenomenon on the entire criminal "framework" and its interrelation with other phenomena in the criminal world (Batyrehareieva, 2024). This data is a prerequisite for two key purposes: firstly, to assess the degree of danger that glorification poses to Ukrainian society as a whole; and secondly, to calculate the costs of measures that Ukraine needs to take to overcome it.

According to the information published on the website of the Prosecutor General's Office, 1,354 cases of glorification (Article 436-2 of the CCU) were registered in 2022, 1,282 in 2023, and 632 criminal offences in the first six months of 2024 (Unified report on criminal offenses for January-December 2022; Unified report on criminal offenses for January-

December 2023; Unified report on criminal offenses for January-March 2024). It is important to note a significant discrepancy between the number of identified cases of glorification of the enemy and the number of convictions and convicted individuals. For example, in 2022, there were 288 guilty verdicts, and in 2023, 547. As for the number of convictions, there were 295 convictions in 2022 and 554 in 2023 (Report of the courts of first instance on consideration of criminal proceedings in 2022; Report of the courts of first instance on consideration of criminal proceedings in 2023). As evidenced by the data, there was a nearly twofold increase in the number of convictions and the number of individuals convicted for glorifying Russian invaders in 2023 compared to the previous year. This indicates a positive trend in Ukrainian society's response to the phenomenon of glorification. Concurrently, a mere 18% of those convicted by Ukrainian courts for glorification are incarcerated, including those sentenced to imprisonment, while 82% of the convicted are released on probation. In contrast, over the past few years, imprisonment has been imposed on approximately 60% of convicted individuals in Ukraine on average.

Based on a summary of the verdicts of Ukrainian courts and open data from the SBU investigative bodies, most of the glorifiers are middle-aged and older people, i.e., those who were born and lived a significant part of their adult lives in the USSR. Therefore, the most numerous age group is those who are approaching retirement or have already retired, which is 66.1% of the total. However, there are also those who were born in independent Ukraine and are under the age of thirty. It is noteworthy that even among teenagers (16-18 years old) there are people who support Russian armed aggression and glorify the occupiers. Almost 30 % of perpetrators of hero worship are women, which is at least three times the proportion of women in the overall crime structure in Ukraine. About 70% of people of working age are neither working nor studying. Among those in employment, engineering and technical workers, civil servants, local government officials, teachers, doctors, journalists, clergy and farmers predominate. There is also a significant number of homeless people among the glorified labour force.

When forecasting the further development of the situation with the dangerous phenomenon of glorification, it is important to note that the nature of this phenomenon is very complex. This is due to the fact that powerful ideological factors, psychological influences, moods, feelings and emotions play an important role in its causal complex. Moreover, glorification is highly sensitive to enemy propaganda and the objective situation on the Russian-Ukrainian front, which is constantly changing. Therefore, this type of crime is characterised by multidirectional trends.

On the one hand, as a result of the de-occupation of the Ukrainian territories and the receipt by law enforcement agencies of information on the behaviour of those who actively supported the enemy during the occupation, the number of recorded criminal offences is likely to increase. In this connection, a so-called pessimistic short-term criminological scenario of the development of the criminogenic situation with the glorification of the enemy will be observed in the de-occupied Ukrainian territories. The same trend is likely to be observed due to the growing war fatigue among the Ukrainian population, especially in regions far from the combat zone, which could lead to an increase in glorification sentiments rooted in the perceived futility of fighting a "strong" enemy and the spread of ideas about the need to end the war as soon as possible, even on terms favourable to the aggressor state. This will largely depend on the international community's attitude to events in Ukraine, as any weakening or slowing of international military aid to Ukraine, as well as the situational strengthening of pro-Russian lobbying positions in the world, will affect the mood of Ukrainian society.

On the other hand, understanding the terrible consequences of the Russian occupation (massacres, extrajudicial executions, torture of military personnel and civilians, disappearances of Ukrainian citizens, involvement of private military companies in armed aggression against Ukraine, which include persons convicted of grave and especially grave violent crimes, violations of international humanitarian law regarding the laws and customs of war, etc.) and the forced stay of Ukrainian citizens under Russian occupation in conditions of terror and intimidation will undoubtedly contribute to a decrease in the number of supporters of the Putin regime in the future. Thus, in the further development of the phenomenon under analysis, there will be two diametrically opposed processes, which will nevertheless generally keep the number of glorification incidents from increasing beyond the current level, perhaps with some non-critical growth.

### **3. Social and Legal Analysis of the Glorification Phenomenon**

The objective assessment of the phenomenon of glorification is a multifaceted process involving the analysis of socio-legal, economic, criminological, psychological and other aspects. This comprehensive approach is essential for the development of effective measures to counteract this phenomenon and mitigate its negative impact on Ukrainian society. Therefore, a thorough analysis of the issue from different perspectives is necessary to deepen the understanding of this phenomenon.

The socio-legal analysis of glorification should focus on those manifestations of the phenomenon that require a legal response from society and other general social and special criminological measures aimed at preventing further spread of glorification.

From a social point of view, against the backdrop of conflicts, hostility and wars, glorification, which exalts and glorifies the enemy, infecting society with its ideology by humiliating (even calling for the physical destruction of) its own people, is an extremely dangerous phenomenon for the national unity of a particular society. As such, it requires a legal response. In such cases, a parallel can be drawn between two events: "exaltation" on the one hand and "humiliation" on the other. Today in Ukraine, there is a "revival" of the idea of totalitarianism in the image of the USSR by some members of Ukrainian society through Russian narratives reproduced through the phenomenon of glorification, as well as attempts to humiliate and even trample on the historical memory of their own people. This motive makes glorification erroneous, harmful and dangerous for Ukraine as an independent state. This naturally raises the question of the price of losing statehood, independence and autonomy as a result of the aggressive war that Russia is waging against Ukraine. No one even tries to calculate the cost of the disappearance of a sovereign state from the political map of the world, which, as the research shows, is the ultimate goal of the actions of the glorifiers. In this regard, it can only be assumed that the task is extremely complex, as the concept of damage encompasses many factors and aspects of both a material and immaterial nature. Indicators include the loss of gross domestic product due to the destruction of industrial, agricultural and transport infrastructure, the reduction or complete cessation of national production capacity, the loss of jobs and investment attractiveness, the halting of exports and imports of goods and services, the destruction of housing stock, and the forced relocation of Ukrainian citizens to other countries. Other indicators include the deaths and injuries (leading to disability) of many Ukrainians, the poor psychological state of the Ukrainian population, increased levels of stress, depression and suicide, the breakdown of families and social ties, and a decline in the quality of life of those who remained in the occupied territories (due to lack of access to healthcare, education, housing and other social services of adequate quality), destruction of science, the education system, spiritual heritage and historical memory of the people as a result of the destruction of architectural monuments, museums, libraries and other culturally valuable objects, and the brain drain to other countries. In addition, the loss of political positions in the world due to the loss of sovereignty, as the ability of Ukraine to make



political decisions independently, control domestic and foreign affairs, and participate in international processes is decreasing, thereby lowering its status in the international arena.

These and other losses deliberately caused by the cumulative actions of the glorifiers of the Russian aggressor require serious social and legal evaluation, just as glorification as a phenomenon requires such evaluation, since it is a criminal offence in Ukraine. The only certainty today is that the approach to assessing the actual losses should take into account all these indicators. However, it must be frankly acknowledged that there is no methodology capable of fully reflecting the depth of the social catastrophe associated with the loss of independence, as the value of human life, culture and national identity has no monetary equivalent.

When studying the social and legal dimensions of the glorification phenomenon, it is worth paying attention to the hypothesis that an active glorifier is a potential collaborator, which is also a criminal offence in Ukraine. In the event of a negative outcome for Ukraine, such persons are likely to form a stratum of society that will openly cooperate with the occupiers. There are already cases in court practice where individuals not only glorified the enemy, but also publicly called on Ukrainian citizens to support the decisions and actions of the aggressor state, its armed forces and occupation administration, and to deny the extension of Ukraine's state sovereignty to the temporarily occupied territories (part 1 of Article 111-1 of the CCU). Therefore, glorification serves as a precursor to the far more dangerous act of criminal collaboration with the enemy. This enables the occupier to establish a power structure on occupied Ukrainian territories, sustain life there according to the needs of the aggressor state, and suppress pro-Ukrainian opposition. As evidenced by empirical observation, those who espouse pro-Russian views occupy the majority of leadership positions within the local government bodies established in the occupied territories. They also join the ranks of quasi-law enforcement and judicial bodies, thereby contributing to the suppression of the pro-Ukrainian opposition. This not only consolidates the invaders on already occupied Ukrainian lands but also strengthens their resolve and confidence in further advancing into Ukraine's interior.

In the context of the phenomenon under consideration, it is also necessary to highlight the impact of glorification sentiments on the mobilisation processes in Ukraine, which are essential for ensuring the country's defence. It is evident that there is a prevailing apprehension regarding the prospect of being mobilised into the Ukrainian Armed Forces, which is considerably intensified by the proliferation of glorification narratives surrounding the military

capabilities of the adversary. The results of the survey of the general public indicate that the glorification narrative surrounding the image of a powerful Russia and its soldiers is a significant factor. This leads to the hypothesis that the glorification of the aggressor creates an obstacle to the lawful activities of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and thus endangers the country's defence capabilities.

In addition, glorification rhetoric is often associated with the glorification of the Russian language, history and the Russian people as a whole, as well as with the praise of the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. This significantly exacerbates social conflicts within the country among supporters of the opposite pro-Ukrainian worldview, leads to incitement to national, racial or religious hatred and enmity, and violation of the equality of citizens based on their nationality, political beliefs, religion, ethnic origin, social status, language or other characteristics, which are also criminal offences under Ukrainian law.

#### **4. Economic Analysis of the Glorification Phenomenon**

One of the dangerous social effects of glorification is that it reinforces the enemy's illusion (or confidence) in the correctness of its actions. These "actions" result in the death and injury of Ukrainian citizens, the destruction of housing, infrastructure, buildings and communications, etc., all of which have tangible economic costs. In addition, there is a significant decrease in the investment attractiveness of Ukraine, losses in the export and import of goods and services, reduced revenues from tourism, and more. It can be seen that there is a direct correlation between the enemy's criminal aggression and the extremely dangerous consequences for Ukraine, which manifest as direct and indirect material losses. These losses are associated with the costs of rebuilding housing, industry, agriculture, transportation, energy, and other infrastructures, as well as expenses related to the burial of the dead, treatment of the wounded, support for people with disabilities, and providing social support to those who have lost breadwinners. Furthermore, the decline in the number of taxpayers, the potential for political instability that may impede social reforms, the increased expenditure on defence and security (which may result in a reduction in spending on other social programmes), and the continued operation of the criminal justice system to ensure accountability for those who glorify criminal activities and their subsequent incarceration, collectively contribute to these losses.

Since the beginning of the full-scale Russian military invasion, the total amount of direct damage to residential and non-residential real estate, other infrastructure, vehicles and inventory has exceeded

157 billion USD (Report on direct damage to infrastructure from destruction as a result of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine as of the beginning of 2024). Below is a general estimate of direct losses provided by the Kyiv School of Economics in its Report on Direct Infrastructure Damage from Destruction as a Result of Russia's Military Aggression against Ukraine as of early 2024 (Figure 1).

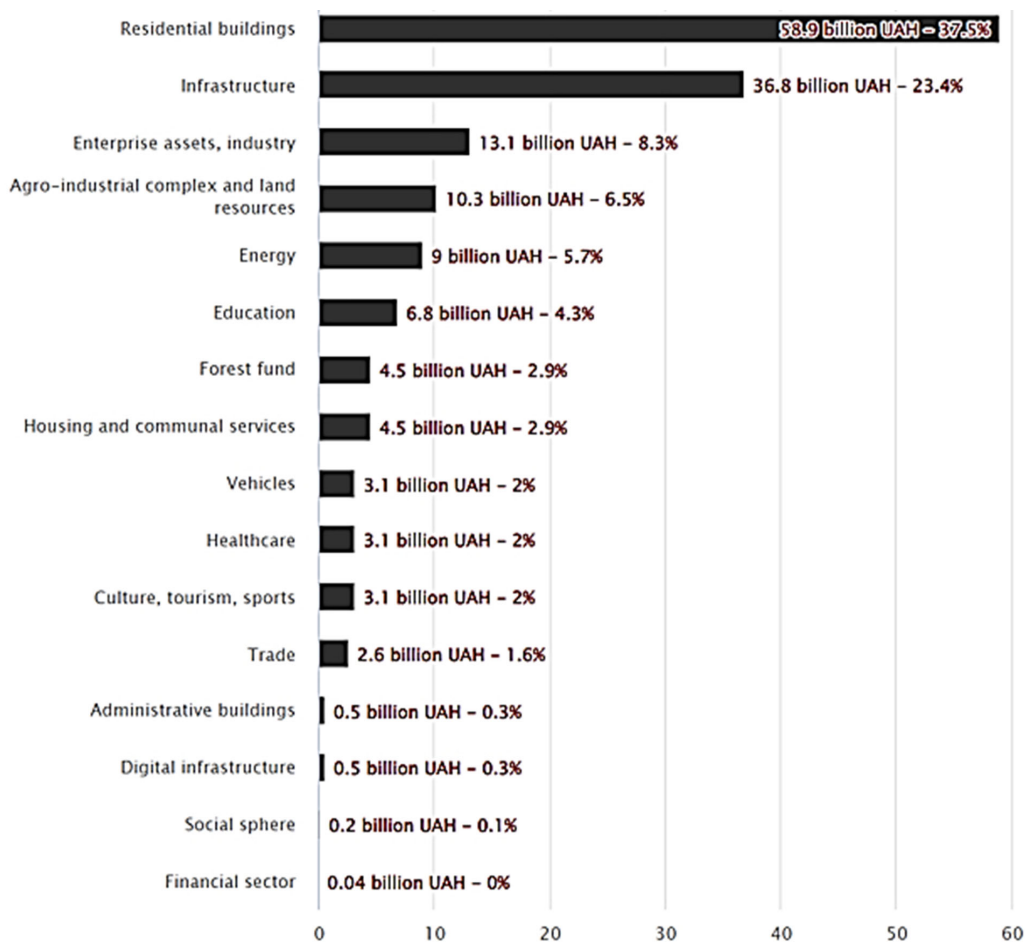
As can be seen, the residential sector has suffered the greatest losses. Due to the ongoing hostilities and regular shelling, the number of damaged and destroyed residential buildings is increasing daily. As of January 2024, more than 250,000 buildings have been damaged or destroyed, including 222,000 private houses, more than 27,000 apartment buildings and 526 dormitories. Direct losses from the destruction of these structures are estimated at 58.9 billion USD (Damage to Ukraine's infrastructure from Russia's aggression has reached \$155 billion).

The regions of Ukraine most affected by the Russian aggression are those where active hostilities have taken place or are ongoing (Donetsk, Kharkiv,

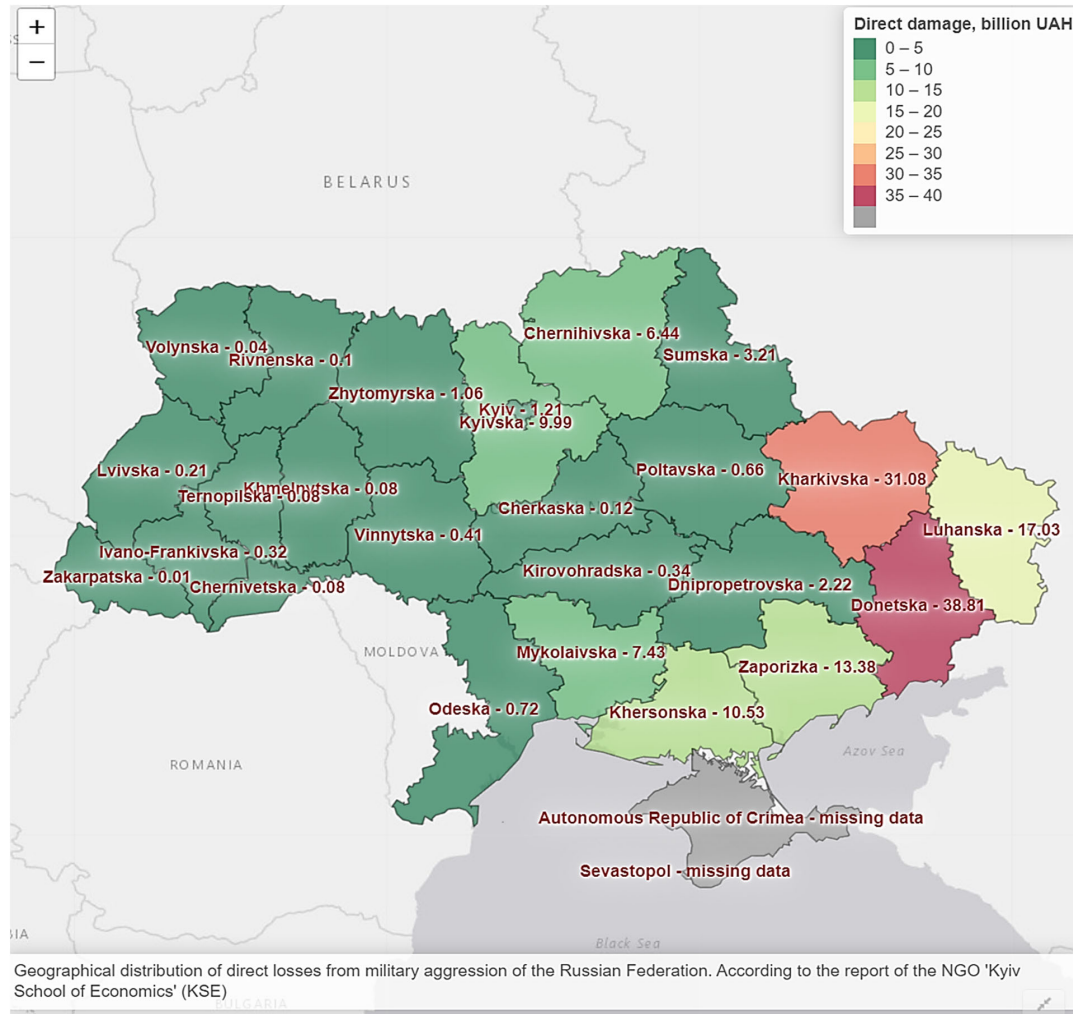
Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv and Chernihiv oblasts). It is noteworthy that the regions most affected also coincide with the areas where a significant number of glorification cases were identified (Maps 2 and 3). Most cases of glorification identified by law enforcement agencies are concentrated in regions adjacent to the war zones. Therefore, geographically, these two projections (significant material damage and concentration of glorification in certain regions) are closely related to the contours of the frontline. This pattern is called the "arc of glorification".

Furthermore, the financial burden associated with combating glorification extends to the state's expenditure on administering justice and maintaining the incarceration of convicted individuals during the period of their sentence or suspended sentence.

As indicated by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, prior to Russia's comprehensive incursion into Ukraine, the average expenditure incurred for the sustenance of a single detainee in Ukraine was estimated at 10,000 UAH per month (approximately 450 USD) (Kovalenko, 2021). Today, this figure



**Figure 1. General assessment of direct infrastructure damage as of the beginning of 2024**  
 Source: compiled by the team of authors of grant project titled "Criminal Law and Criminological Foundations for Countering the Glorification of Armed Aggression by the Russian Federation in Ukraine" based on the Report on direct damage to infrastructure from destruction due to military aggression of the NGO "Kyiv School of Economics" (KSE) ([https://rpubs.com/N\\_Karchevskiy/1206987](https://rpubs.com/N_Karchevskiy/1206987))



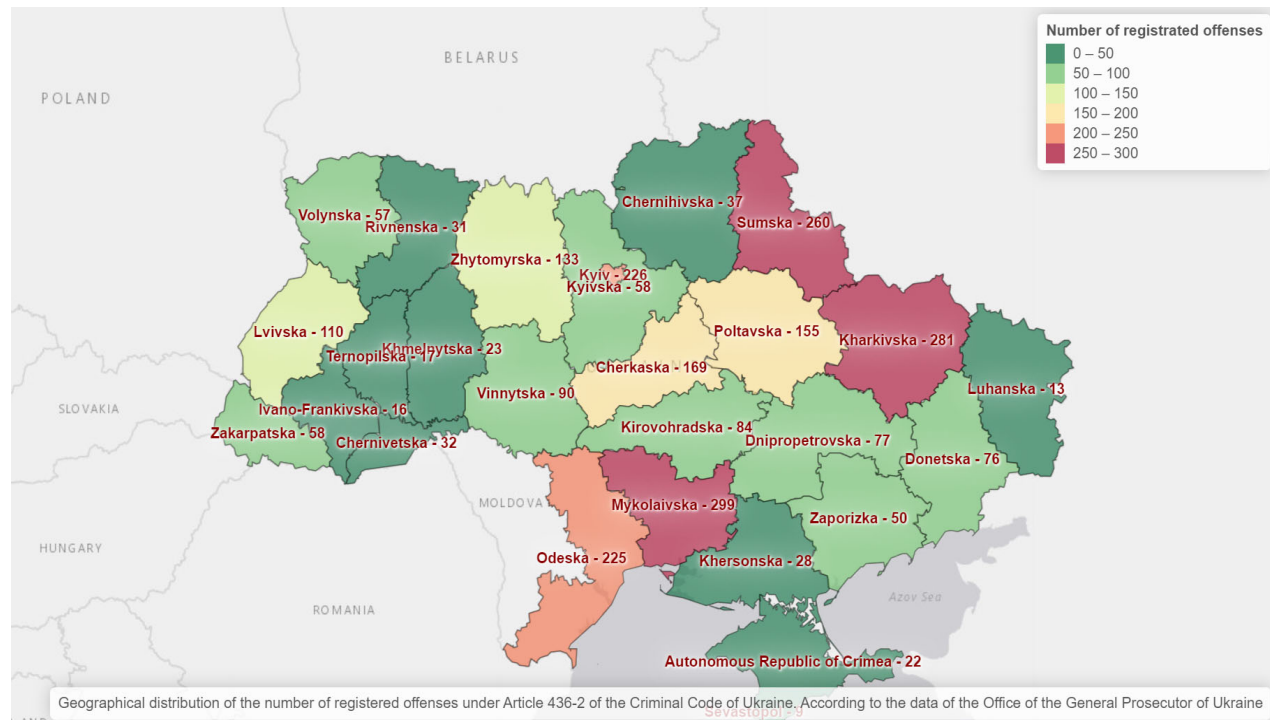
**Figure 2. Ten most affected regions of Ukraine by Russian aggression (billion USD)**

Source: compiled by the team of authors of grant project titled "Criminal Law and Criminological Foundations for Countering the Glorification of Armed Aggression by the Russian Federation in Ukraine" based on the Report on direct damage to infrastructure from destruction due to military aggression of Russian Federation against Ukraine as of the beginning of 2024 ([https://rpubs.com/N\\_Karchevskiy/1206990](https://rpubs.com/N_Karchevskiy/1206990))

must take into account, among other things, inflation due to declining economic indicators, which affects the cost of goods and services, additional expenses related to ensuring the safety of inmates during air raids, the involvement of psychological specialists, and the overall cost of maintaining law enforcement and judicial personnel, as well as material and technical support for their activities. Therefore, the cost of maintaining a prisoner in detention is likely to be significantly higher. According to the same Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, a criminal sentence in the form of probation is ten times cheaper than imprisonment (Ministry of Justice: Criminal punishment in the form of probation is ten times cheaper than imprisonment, 2022). According the estimates, taking into account the number of people serving their sentences in prisons and those subject to probation, Ukraine spends about 1 million USD per year. Obviously, these costs will only increase due to the above factors.

## 5. Criminological Analysis of the Phenomenon of Glorification

In this phase of the investigation, the focus was on the interrelated nature of the various elements of enemy glorification. Primarily, this is in relation to the prevailing state of law and order in the country as a whole. Secondly, it is related to other negative phenomena that cause and exacerbate the harmful impact of glorification on Ukrainian society. It is therefore evident that further criminological study is required in order to develop a set of measures aimed at reducing the number of such offences in a timely manner. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to concentrate on significant factors that influence the assessment of the dangerousness of this phenomenon. Consequently, further examination is required of the criminological markers of the process of glorifying the enemy.



**Figure 3. Distribution of detected cases of glorification by law enforcement agencies across the regions of Ukraine**  
 Source: developments of the team of authors of grant project titled "Criminal Law and Criminological Foundations for Countering the Glorification of Armed Aggression by the Russian Federation in Ukraine" ([https://rpubs.com/N\\_Karchevskiy/1207358](https://rpubs.com/N_Karchevskiy/1207358))

It is important to note that the specificity of the glorification of the aggressor in Ukraine is rooted in its ideological basis, which has been formed over decades. Indeed, a long stay in the common geopolitical space, the absence of language barriers, the enemy's deep understanding of the national mentality, the existence of the so-called common "historical memory", combined with the low level of media literacy among the Ukrainian population and their critical perception of destructive content (Netesa, 2023, p. 208) create favourable conditions for certain groups of the population to perceive the Russian world ideology as something "close in spirit". The positive image of the aggressor state has been shaped for years by ideological propaganda, which the Russian state has skilfully used to justify its aggression by spreading fake news, manipulating information and constructing a narrative about the "liberation" of Ukraine from the Nazis". Nationalist attitudes have become a central theme of Russian propaganda to mobilise the population and create an atmosphere of hostility towards Ukraine. Glorifiers have adopted these themes, spreading stereotypes of Ukrainians as "Banderites"(nationalists) to justify why they should "obey" Russia.

Furthermore, as the psychological impact of war intensifies, there is a growing perception among the population that Russia can act as a peacemaker and that peace can only be achieved through Russian

domination in Ukraine. Most glorifiers of the armed aggression perceive Ukraine as an "autonomous part" of Russia and continue to idealise the Soviet era, citing such, in their opinion, undeniable 'advantages' of the USSR as social guarantees (free education, healthcare, housing, employment, etc.) (54.0%); stability and predictability of life (31.1%); affordable prices for food, essential goods, clothing, etc. (29.7%); and others. The motivation of glorifiers is reinforced by the strong influence of the Russian information products they consume, among which the most prominent are Russian analytical programmes (51.2%), films and TV series (42%) and music (36.3%).

It is evident that the impetus behind the glorification activities is rooted in the fulfilment of fundamental human requirements and the discontentment with the extent of their fulfilment in Ukraine. These findings have significant implications for the formulation of state policy on social support for the population of Ukraine. It is imperative to ensure real equality of Ukrainian citizens regardless of their national origin. Furthermore, it is essential to prevent the aggravation of interethnic, linguistic, religious and other social conflicts in Ukrainian society. Additionally, information activities aimed at countering Russian propaganda and disinformation must be conducted. It is similarly evident that greater focus should be allocated to the creation and promotion of indigenous informational products designed to



reinforce Ukrainian societal cohesion, reinforce the national-state ideology, and advance the development of Ukrainian education and science.

A further significant criminological indicator that elucidates the genesis and dissemination of the phenomenon of glorification in Ukraine is the discernment of the conduits through which the populace is "infected" with an adversarial ideology and the subsequent propagation of this ideology. While not diminishing the role of traditional, time-tested channels of spreading harmful information that glorifies the aggressor, such as television and radio, which remain quite effective in influencing the elderly, it is essential to note the trend towards the "digitalisation" of glorification.

The accessibility of information and communication technologies, with their undeniable advantages in terms of distance, immediacy, anonymity, and the scale of information dissemination to an undefined audience, make the Internet and mass communication tools the unquestioned leaders among the means and methods of spreading information that justifies, legitimises, or denies the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and glorifies its participants. This is corroborated by data derived from the generalization of national judicial practices, which demonstrate that social networks and electronic communication tools (messengers) were utilized in 83.1% of cases involving the glorification of the aggressor in relation to criminal offenses. As might be expected, the majority of instances of glorifying the enemy occur on information dissemination channels that are prohibited in Ukraine, particularly the social networks "Odnoklassniki" (61.7%) and "VKontakte" (6.3%) (Batyrehareieva, Netesa, 2024, p. 22).

Nevertheless, there is considerable apprehension regarding the utilisation of legally sanctioned platforms for the dissemination of information and communication in Ukraine, including those that are extensively employed by diverse segments of the population, such as Telegram (7.0%) and Facebook (4.6%). In light of these considerations, the most effective initial measure to restrict the dissemination of glorification views in Ukraine's information space would be the technological blocking of access to relevant information resources with destructive content. Such actions may be taken by deleting and blocking user posts on social media pages and removing their accounts in cases of violating the terms and rules of social networks.

Therefore, the high-tech sector should serve as a barrier against the criminal glorification of the aggressor when offenders use Internet tools. At the same time, the legislative framework supporting the use of artificial intelligence and the improvement of measures to implement state policy in the field of information security remain critical. These measures

should be aimed at strengthening the information resilience of Ukrainian society and the state, improving information hygiene and social responsibility for the dissemination of destructive content, promoting the development of Ukrainian civic identity, and ensuring the information reintegration of the population in the temporarily occupied territories into the broader Ukrainian information space (Netesa, Mokliak, 2023, p. 105).

## 6. Conclusions

1. The glorification of Russian aggression against Ukraine represents a complex and inherently dangerous social phenomenon, driven by powerful ideological factors that have been developed over decades through the dissemination of hostile propaganda. It is regrettable that the Ukrainian society's response to Russian propaganda and overt support for pro-Russian political courses was not more prompt, resulting in significant consequences for Ukraine. These include the occupation of considerable portions of Ukrainian territory, the emergence of numerous individuals who have collaborated with the enemy (many of whom have been glorified), and, most distressingly, substantial losses among military and civilian populations.

2. The advent of the glorification phenomenon in Ukraine is also associated with the presence of a pivotal democratic indicator – freedom of speech and expression – which, on occasion, places undue emphasis on private interests over public ones, including national security. Furthermore, the issue is compounded by a proclivity towards excessive humanitarianism in the policies towards offenders (including captured enemies). These characteristics primarily define the specificity of glorification in Ukraine, as no country in conflict has suffered from mass glorification of the enemy during the acute phase of war.

3. Glorification as a harbinger of large-scale aggression, which leads to unpredictable consequences, affects the socio-legal, economic, criminological and other dimensions. In order to develop a system of preventive measures and their effective implementation, a comprehensive study of the phenomenon of glorification, including the methodology for assessing the harmfulness of this phenomenon, is necessary.

4. The socio-legal assessment of glorification shows that Russian narratives perpetuated through glorification are aimed at destroying the historical memory of the Ukrainian people and Ukraine as a sovereign state. However, there is currently no methodology that would allow for a quantitative assessment of these losses in monetary terms, including the value of human life, culture, spiritual heritage and national identity. In addition, the socio-legal dimension of glorification is manifested in

the fact that it gives rise to more dangerous forms of illegal behaviour, such as collaboration with the enemy, incitement to national, religious and other forms of enmity and hatred, and obstruction of Ukraine's defence capability.

5. The economic analysis of glorification involves estimating real losses, which include direct losses exceeding 157 billion USD (e.g., destruction of residential, industrial, agricultural, transport and energy infrastructure), as well as indirect losses, such as loss of investment attractiveness, reduced tourism revenues, and costs associated with burying the dead and treating the injured. An integral part of the costs associated with glorification is the cost of administering justice and maintaining prisoners in prisons while serving their sentences or suspended sentences. These costs amount to approximately 1 million USD per year. Geographically, the arc of glorification correlates with the country's defence line, suggesting that the regions most affected by glorification reflect the frontline. However, this arc may be shifting towards regions farther away from the front line due to the negative impact of glorification on mobilisation and the deliberate incitement of social conflicts within the country.

6. The criminological assessment of glorification is based on markers that ultimately determine a set of measures aimed at reducing offences related to the glorification of the enemy. These include the motivation of offenders and the channels through which they

disseminate the ideas of glorification, creating a threat of ideological contamination of other members of Ukrainian society.

7. The motivations of those in Ukraine who glorify the country's past, despite a shared history with Russia and the influence of Russian propaganda, perpetuate the narrative of attributing external factors to Russia's shortcomings. These external factors, as espoused by glorifiers, include Western Europe, the USA, and some former Soviet republics, including Ukraine. This is demonstrated by the primary narratives of glorifiers concerning Ukrainian nationalists and their portrayal of Russia as a peacemaker, which suggests that peace in Ukraine can only be achieved through Russia's dominance.

8. The accessibility of information and communication technologies, their immediacy, anonymity, and the scale of information dissemination through them make the Internet and mobile applications the primary channels for the dissemination of information glorifying Russian aggression against Ukraine. These channels account for 83.1% of all instances of glorification, indicating a trend towards the "digitalisation" of glorification. This emphasises the necessity to reorient the focus of countermeasures towards the domain of information technology and to reinforce measures pertaining to the implementation of state policy in information security, with the objective of enhancing the informational awareness and resilience of Ukrainian society and the state.

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