



**JATSS, 2024; 6(4), 264-276**

**First Submission: 30.10.2024**

**Revised Submission After Review: 19.11.2024**

**Accepted For Publication: 28.12.2024**

**Available Online Since:31.12.2024**

**Research Article**

**Strategic Miscalculations: Putin's War in Ukraine and Its Global Repercussions**

**Yaşar Onay<sup>a</sup>**

**Abstract**

**Introduction:** The war in Ukraine, initiated by Russian President Vladimir Putin in February 2022, is one of the most consequential geopolitical crises of the 21st century. Initially conceived as a swift military operation to overthrow the Ukrainian government and reestablish Russian influence, the conflict instead turned into a prolonged and devastating war. Putin's numerous strategic miscalculations – from underestimating Ukraine's military capabilities to misjudging Western unity and the impact of economic sanctions – have led to significant economic, military, and political consequences for Russia. This paper explores these strategic failures in depth, examining the role of Ukrainian resistance, the global response, and the long-term implications for Russia's internal and external standing.

**Method:** In this study, a descriptive analysis was used as a method. In the descriptive analysis, literature reviews were analyzed by comparing them.

**Results or Findings:** Ukraine's resistance and the unity of the West to overestimating Russia's ability to withstand economic sanctions, these errors have left Russia facing an uncertain future. The prolonged nature of the conflict, combined with the growing risk of domestic instability and the limitations of international alliances, has severely weakened Russia's regional and global position.

**Discussion or Conclusion:** As the war drags on, the consequences of these miscalculations will continue to shape Russia's fate for years to come.

*Keywords:* Putin, Ukraine war, Russian military, economic sanctions, NATO, strategic miscalculations

*JEL Codes:* P10, P20, Z18

---

<sup>a</sup> Prof. Dr., Istanbul Kent University, Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, Department of International Relations, Istanbul/Türkiye, [yasar.onay@kent.edu.tr](mailto:yasar.onay@kent.edu.tr), ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1164-9692> (Corresponding Author)



JATSS, 2024; 6(4), 264-276

*İlk Başvuru: 30.10.2024*

*Düzeltilmiş Makalenin Alınışı: 19.11.2024*

*Yayın İçin Kabul Tarihi: 28.12.2024*

*Online Yayın Tarihi: 31.12.2024*

**Araştırma Makalesi**

**Stratejik Yanlış Hesaplamalar: Putin'in Ukrayna Savaşı ve Küresel Yansımaları**

**Yaşar Onay<sup>a</sup>**

**Öz**

**Giriş:** Şubat 2022'de Rusya Devlet Başkanı Vladimir Putin tarafından başlatılan Ukrayna'daki savaş, 21. yüzyılın en önemli jeopolitik krizlerinden biridir. Başlangıçta Ukrayna hükümetini devirmek ve Rus nüfuzunu yeniden tesis etmek için hızlı bir askeri operasyon olarak tasarlanan çatışma, bunun yerine uzun süreli ve yıkıcı bir savaşa dönüştü. Putin'in Ukrayna'nın askeri yeteneklerini küçümsemekten Batı'nın birliğini ve ekonomik yaptırımların etkisini yanlış değerlendirmeye kadar çok sayıda stratejik yanlış hesaplaması, Rusya için önemli ekonomik, askeri ve politik sonuçlara yol açtı. Bu makale, söz konusu stratejik başarısızlıkları derinlemesine ele alarak, Ukrayna direnişinin rolünü, küresel tepkiyi ve Rusya'nın iç ve dış konumu üzerindeki uzun vadeli etkilerini incelemektedir.

**Yöntem:** Bu çalışmada yöntem olarak betimsel bir inceleme yapılmıştır. Betimsel incelemede literatür taramaları karşılaştırılarak analiz edilmiştir.

**Sonuçlar ya da Bulgular:** Ukrayna'nın direnişini ve Batı'nın birliğini küçümsemekten, Rusya'nın ekonomik yaptırımlara dayanma yeteneğini abartmaya kadar, yapılan hatalar Rusya'yı belirsiz bir gelecekle karşı karşıya bıraktı. Çatışmanın uzun süren doğası, artan iç istikrarsızlık riski ve uluslararası ittifakların sınırlamalarıyla birleşince, Rusya'nın bölgesel ve küresel konumunu ciddi şekilde zayıflattı.

**Tartışma ya da Yapılan Çıkarımlar:** Savaş uzadıkça, yanlış hesaplamaların sonuçları önümüzdeki yıllarda Rusya'nın kaderini şekillendirmeye devam edecek.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Putin, Ukrayna savaşı, Rus ordusu, ekonomik yaptırımlar, NATO, stratejik yanlış hesaplamalar

*JEL Kodlar:* P10, P20, Z18

<sup>a</sup> Prof. Dr., İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi, İktisadi İdari ve Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü, İstanbul/Türkiye, yasar.onay@kent.edu.tr, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1164-9692> (Sorumlu Yazar)

## **Introduction**

When Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a large-scale military operation in Ukraine in February 2022, the Kremlin anticipated a swift victory. The invasion, which Putin framed as a "special military operation," was designed to rapidly overthrow Ukraine's government, reinstall a pro-Russian leadership in Kyiv, and further consolidate Russia's sphere of influence in its near abroad. However, the conflict did not proceed as expected. Instead of a swift victory, Russia has found itself mired in a protracted war, facing stiff Ukrainian resistance, unprecedented Western sanctions, and a military campaign plagued by logistical and strategic failures (Blinken, 2023). However, the reality that unfolded was drastically different. What was intended to be a brief campaign has dragged into a prolonged war, exposing the limits of Russia's military power and inflicting significant damage on its economy and international standing. Several critical miscalculations have emerged as defining features of this conflict, revealing Putin's failure to fully grasp the complexities of Ukraine's military preparedness, national identity, the unity of the West, the impact of economic sanctions, and the risks of a long-term conflict. These oversights have left Russia facing an uncertain future both regionally and globally.

Putin's invasion has triggered thus one of the largest geopolitical crises in recent history, with far-reaching consequences not only for Ukraine and Russia but also for the global order. This paper aims to dissect the strategic miscalculations behind the invasion and analyze the resulting fallout. From underestimating Ukraine's military capabilities and national resolve to overestimating Russia's economic resilience in the face of sanctions, Putin's decisions have left Russia facing significant challenges on both the domestic and international fronts.

### **Putin's Strategic Miscalculations**

#### **Underestimating Ukraine's Military Preparedness and National Unity**

One of the most glaring miscalculations in Putin's strategy was his underestimation of the strength and resilience of Ukraine's military and civilian population. The Kremlin had assumed that Ukraine, destabilized by years of internal political struggles and military limitations following the 2014 annexation of Crimea and the ongoing conflict in Donbas, would crumble quickly in the face of Russian aggression. Indeed, Russia's relatively swift success in backing separatists in Donbas likely contributed to this belief, as did Ukraine's historical dependence on foreign support. However, the situation in 2022 was dramatically different. Following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its support for separatists in the Donbas region, Ukraine embarked on a comprehensive overhaul of its military. With substantial assistance from NATO and Western allies, Ukraine restructured its armed forces, modernized its equipment, and adopted new tactics to better defend against potential Russian aggression (Bryan Frederick, Mark Cozad, Alexandra Stark, 2023). By 2022, Ukraine's military was not the disorganized force Russia had anticipated but rather a well-trained, well-equipped force capable of mounting a strong defense.

The training and equipment provided by NATO, including advanced weapons systems such as anti-tank missiles, drones, and air defense systems, greatly enhanced Ukraine's defensive capabilities. The Ukrainian military's use of modern anti-tank weapons, like the Javelin and NLAW systems provided by the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as drones like the Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2, played a pivotal role in stalling Russian advances, particularly around Kyiv. Furthermore, Ukraine employed decentralized command structures, allowing local commanders to respond more flexibly to the changing dynamics on the

battlefield. These tactics, combined with Ukraine's effective use of social media and information warfare to counter Russian propaganda, showcased a highly adaptive and resilient military force (TC Helmus 2024).

This modernization was one of the key factors that allowed Ukraine to halt the Russian advance in the early stages of the war, inflicting heavy losses on Russian forces that had expected little resistance.

Beyond military preparedness, the invasion served to galvanize Ukrainian national identity in ways that Putin had not anticipated. Ukraine's strong sense of national identity is rooted in its complex history of struggling for independence, particularly against Russian and Soviet dominance. The memory of the Holodomor, a man-made famine in Soviet Ukraine in the 1930s, left deep scars on the national psyche and fueled a collective determination to resist any form of foreign domination. The 2014 Euromaidan protests, which resulted in the ousting of pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich, further cemented Ukraine's shift toward European integration and independence from Russian influence. By framing Ukraine as an artificial state and part of Russia's historical territory, Putin failed to grasp the depth of Ukraine's national consciousness, which was, in fact, strengthened by the very threat of Russian invasion.

Far from being fractured along regional and linguistic lines, Ukraine unified in response to the existential threat posed by the invasion. Even in regions with significant Russian-speaking populations, such as Kharkiv and Odesa, there was widespread resistance to Russian forces. The perception that Ukraine's sovereignty and very existence as an independent state were at stake mobilized not only the military but also the civilian population. Volunteers flocked to join territorial defense units, while civilians in major cities such as Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Lviv transformed their neighborhoods into makeshift fortresses. Even the culturally diverse capital, Kyiv, stood firm against the Russian assault, bolstered by the leadership of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. (Mankoff, 2022).

### **Overlooking the Strength of Civil Society**

In addition to its military defense, Ukraine's civil society played an indispensable role in resisting the Russian invasion. Civilians across the country mobilized to support the war effort, transforming their communities into centers of resistance. Volunteers joined local defense units, civilians organized supply chains to deliver food, medical supplies, and ammunition to the front lines, and the population at large participated in intelligence gathering, reporting Russian troop movements through encrypted messaging services (Kepe&Demus, 2022). This level of civilian engagement was entirely unexpected by the Kremlin, which failed to anticipate the depth of Ukraine's societal mobilization.

Furthermore, Ukraine's media and communication strategies were critical in countering Russian disinformation and galvanizing international support. The Ukrainian government and civil society leveraged social media platforms to document Russian war crimes and highlight the resilience of the Ukrainian people. This digital battleground proved vital in securing Western aid and solidarity, as images of civilian suffering in cities like Mariupol and Bucha stirred international outrage (Kepe & Demus, 2022).

## **Misreading Western Unity and the Power of Economic Sanctions**

Putin's invasion was also based on the faulty assumption that the West, particularly Europe, would be too divided to respond effectively. This miscalculation stemmed largely from Russia's belief that its significant economic ties with Europe, especially in the energy sector, would create divisions within the European Union, preventing a cohesive response. Russia had long been Europe's largest supplier of natural gas, and countries like Germany were particularly reliant on Russian energy imports, importing nearly 40% of their natural gas from Russia prior to the war (Gross & Stent, 2024).

However, the invasion triggered an unprecedented level of unity among Western nations. The European Union, often criticized for its bureaucratic inefficiency and internal divisions, moved quickly to impose severe economic sanctions on Russia. These sanctions targeted key sectors of the Russian economy, including energy, finance, and technology, and were designed to cripple Russia's ability to fund its war effort. Major Russian banks were cut off from the SWIFT international payments system, and Western sanctions were far more comprehensive than Putin anticipated. Key Russian financial institutions were disconnected from the global financial system, and assets belonging to Russian elites were frozen, cutting them off from their wealth stored abroad (Karl- Habtom, 2023). The ruble quickly devalued, and Russia's central bank was forced to implement emergency measures to prevent a total economic collapse. Perhaps the most significant blow to the Russian economy came in the form of energy sanctions. Although Europe initially hesitated to cut off Russian energy imports due to its heavy reliance on Russian gas, the war accelerated Europe's transition toward alternative energy sources and hastened efforts to reduce energy dependence on Russia.

Germany, historically cautious in terms of military involvement and its reliance on Russian gas, underwent a significant policy shift. Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced a landmark increase in Germany's defense budget and committed to supporting Ukraine with military aid. This marked a dramatic departure from Germany's post-World War II reluctance to engage in military affairs and illustrated the broader shift in European politics in response to Russian aggression (Baun & Marek, 2022). Moreover, NATO significantly strengthened its eastern flank, deploying additional troops and military resources to member states like Poland and the Baltic nations that were particularly concerned about the possibility of Russian expansionism.

NATO, which Putin had long viewed as a strategic threat, also responded decisively. The alliance bolstered its military presence in Eastern Europe, providing reassurance to member states like Poland and the Baltic nations, which were particularly concerned about Russian expansionism. Furthermore, the invasion prompted traditionally neutral countries, such as Finland and Sweden, to apply for NATO membership, further expanding the alliance's reach and complicating Russia's security calculus.

The role of the United States was pivotal in galvanizing this Western unity. The Biden administration played a key role in coordinating sanctions and rallying NATO allies to provide critical military support to Ukraine. The U.S. also provided advanced weaponry and intelligence, significantly boosting Ukraine's ability to defend itself against Russian forces. Putin's misjudgment of the West's willingness to act in unison proved to be a major strategic error, as the sanctions and military support not only hindered Russia's war effort but also isolated the country on the global stage.

## **The Long-Term Economic Impact of Sanctions on Russia**

### **Russia's Economic Resilience and Challenges**

While the immediate economic impact of sanctions on Russia was severe, with the ruble plummeting and inflation soaring, the Kremlin sought to stabilize the economy through a combination of currency controls, increased state intervention, and the pivot of trade relations toward non-Western countries like China and India. Russia's vast reserves of natural resources, particularly oil and gas, provided some buffer against the worst economic consequences in the short term. Moscow also turned to domestic production to replace Western imports, promoting the concept of self-reliance or "import substitution" in key industries ( Prokopenko 2024).

However, these measures have only been partially successful. Russia's attempts to replace Western imports, particularly in high-tech sectors such as semiconductors and telecommunications, have faced significant challenges. The impact of these sanctions was felt across the Russian economy. Western firms rapidly withdrew from the Russian market, leaving significant gaps in supply chains, particularly in industries reliant on imported technology and machinery. Sanctions on critical technologies, such as semiconductors and aerospace components, crippled Russia's ability to maintain and modernize key sectors, including defense and telecommunications. Sanctions targeting advanced technologies crippled Russia's ability to maintain and modernize its industries, particularly in defense and aerospace. Additionally, the withdrawal of Western companies from Russia left critical gaps in supply chains, further hampering Russia's economic recovery. The long-term consequences of these sanctions will likely be felt for years, if not decades, as the loss of foreign investment and access to global markets limits Russia's economic growth prospects (Prokopenko, 2024).

The energy sector, traditionally Russia's most significant economic asset, also faced substantial disruptions. Before the invasion, Europe was Russia's largest market for oil and natural gas exports, providing a substantial portion of the country's revenue. However, as the European Union implemented a phased embargo on Russian oil and reduced its dependence on Russian gas, Russia was forced to seek alternative markets in Asia. Although China and India increased their purchases of Russian energy products, they did so at heavily discounted prices, significantly reducing the profitability of these exports for Moscow ( Milov 2024).

### **The Domestic Consequences of Economic Decline**

The impact of these economic challenges has been felt across Russian society. Rising inflation, unemployment, and the declining availability of essential goods have eroded public confidence in the government's ability to manage the crisis. While the Kremlin has sought to control public discontent through state propaganda and the suppression of dissent, the worsening economic situation has made it increasingly difficult for Putin to maintain popular support for the war.

The domestic political environment in Russia has become more volatile as the war has dragged on. While public protests have been limited due to the repressive actions of the state, dissatisfaction with the war is growing, particularly among younger Russians who are less influenced by state-controlled media and more connected to global information networks (Volkov & Kolesnikov, 2023). Additionally, the use of conscription to bolster Russian forces has sparked anger among families, especially as reports of high casualties continue to emerge. As the war continues, the likelihood of further domestic unrest and challenges to Putin's leadership may increase.

## **The Reality of a Prolonged War**

### **Russian Military Failures and the Costs of a Long Conflict**

Another major miscalculation in Putin's invasion strategy was the expectation of a quick and decisive victory. The Kremlin likely believed that Ukrainian forces would collapse under the weight of Russia's military superiority, leading to the rapid capture of key cities like Kyiv. However, the war quickly turned into a protracted conflict, exposing the weaknesses in Russia's military infrastructure and its inability to sustain a long-term war effort. (The Economist,2022)

Logistical issues plagued the Russian military from the outset, with reports of fuel shortages, supply chain disruptions, and poorly equipped troops. These problems were compounded by low morale among Russian soldiers, many of whom were conscripts with limited training and unclear objectives. High casualty rates further hindered Russia's ability to maintain momentum on the battlefield, and as the war continued, it became increasingly clear that Russia's military was not prepared for a prolonged conflict (The Economist, 2022).

The financial burden of sustaining military operations, combined with the costs of economic sanctions, has placed immense pressure on the Russian economy. The longer the war drags on, the more difficult it becomes for the Kremlin to justify the ongoing costs, both in terms of human lives and financial resources. Moreover, the war has exposed the limitations of Russia's military-industrial complex, which has struggled to replace equipment lost on the battlefield due to the impact of sanctions on key components and technologies.

In addition to underestimating Ukraine's resistance and the West's response, Putin also failed to anticipate the realities of a prolonged conflict. The Kremlin had likely expected a quick and decisive military victory, similar to the annexation of Crimea in 2014, with Ukrainian forces collapsing in the face of Russian military superiority. However, the war quickly evolved into a protracted struggle, placing enormous strain on Russia's military and economic resources.

Ukraine's military, bolstered by continuous Western military aid, managed to halt Russian advances in several key areas. The initial attempt to capture Kyiv, for example, was thwarted by Ukraine's effective use of anti-tank missiles and other advanced weaponry. Russian forces, unprepared for such a high level of resistance, encountered significant logistical challenges, including shortages of fuel, supplies, and equipment. Additionally, reports of low morale among Russian troops, combined with high casualty rates, further hindered Moscow's ability to achieve its objectives.

As the conflict dragged on, the financial burden of sustaining military operations began to weigh heavily on the Russian economy. The combination of international sanctions and the costs of the war created a severe economic crisis, with Russia struggling to fund both its military operations and domestic programs. The prolonged nature of the conflict also exposed the weaknesses in Russia's military infrastructure, as it became increasingly clear that the country was ill-prepared for a sustained war effort.

### **The Human and Social Costs of the War**

The human toll of the war in Ukraine has been devastating. The United Nations estimates that tens of thousands of civilians have been killed or wounded since the conflict began, while millions more have been displaced, leading to the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II (UNHCR, 2023). Ukrainian cities, particularly in the east, have suffered

extensive destruction from Russian artillery and missile strikes, leaving behind a trail of devastation that will take decades and billions of dollars to rebuild.

For Russia, the human cost of the war has also been significant. Reports suggest that thousands of Russian soldiers have been killed, with some estimates placing the number at over 20,000 by mid-2023. The use of poorly trained conscripts, along with mercenary groups like the Wagner Group, has further complicated Russia's military strategy and increased the number of casualties (The Economist, 2023). These losses have sparked growing discontent among Russian families, particularly as the war drags on with no clear end in sight.

### **Risk of Domestic Political Instability**

The war in Ukraine has also intensified political tensions within Russia. As the economic consequences of the conflict have rippled throughout the country, public dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the crisis has grown. Rising inflation, stagnant wages, and shortages of essential goods have led to growing discontent, particularly among the middle class.

While the Kremlin has maintained tight control over the media and suppressed dissent, cracks have begun to appear in the regime's facade. Younger generations, who are more globally connected and less influenced by state propaganda, have been particularly vocal in their opposition to the war. Moreover, the use of conscription to bolster Russian forces has sparked anger among families, especially as reports of heavy casualties continue to emerge.

There is also growing discontent among Russia's elites. Oligarchs and business leaders, many of whom have been directly impacted by Western sanctions, have seen their assets frozen and their ability to travel internationally restricted. These individuals, who have long benefitted from close ties to the Kremlin, may begin to question Putin's leadership as the economic costs of the war continue to mount.

### **Geopolitical Shifts and the Role of China**

#### **China's Ambiguous Support**

One of Putin's most significant strategic miscalculations was his reliance on China as a key strategic partner. While Russia and China had deepened their economic and military ties in the years leading up to the invasion, Beijing's response to the conflict has been far more cautious than Moscow likely expected. Although China has refrained from condemning Russia's actions, it has also avoided providing explicit support for the invasion, maintaining a neutral stance in international forums.

China's reluctance to fully back Russia is driven by its desire to maintain stable relations with the West, particularly the United States and Europe, which remain critical trading partners. While China has increased its purchases of Russian energy products at discounted prices, it has been careful not to violate Western sanctions in sensitive areas such as advanced technology and financial services. This cautious approach has limited the practical support that Russia had hoped to receive from its most powerful ally, leaving Moscow increasingly isolated on the global stage.

#### **Shifting Geopolitical Alliances**

The war in Ukraine has also led to significant shifts in global alliances. As Western nations continue to rally behind Ukraine, Russia has found itself increasingly isolated.



Countries that had traditionally maintained neutral stances, such as Finland and Sweden, have sought closer ties with NATO, further complicating Russia's security calculus. Additionally, the war has strained Russia's relationships with former Soviet states, some of which have distanced themselves from Moscow in response to the invasion

### **Conclusion**

In February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a large-scale military invasion of Ukraine, fundamentally altering the geopolitical landscape of Europe and the world. Russian forces would overwhelm Ukraine's defenses, topple the government in Kyiv, and reassert Russia's influence over its neighbor.

Putin's invasion of Ukraine, initially seen as a bold move to reassert Russia's influence in the region, has exposed several critical strategic miscalculations from underestimating. A critical misstep in Putin's invasion plan was his severe underestimation of Ukraine's military capabilities. In the years following the conflicts of 2014, Ukraine's military underwent significant reforms. With substantial support from Western nations, Ukraine modernized its armed forces, integrating new technologies and tactics to better defend against potential threats from Russia. Beyond military prowess, Ukraine's national unity emerged as a powerful and unexpected force. Putin likely assumed that ethnic and linguistic divisions within Ukraine, particularly in the Russian-speaking east, would fracture the country's response to the invasion. However, the opposite occurred. The invasion galvanized a sense of national identity across the country, including in regions with significant Russian-speaking populations. Cities like Kharkiv and Odesa, which Russia may have expected to sympathize with the Kremlin, instead became strongholds of resistance.

Another critical error in Putin's strategy was his failure to anticipate the level of unity and resolve displayed by Western nations in response to the invasion. In the months leading up to the conflict, Russia had assumed that the West, particularly the European Union, would be divided in its response, hamstrung by competing economic interests and internal political divisions. This belief was partly rooted in Europe's dependence on Russian energy, with countries like Germany importing nearly 40% of their natural gas from Russia. Moscow likely expected that such reliance would prevent a cohesive Western reaction to the invasion.

However, the invasion of Ukraine triggered an unprecedented level of unity among Western nations. The United States, European Union, and NATO acted swiftly and in concert, imposing severe economic sanctions on Russia and providing military and financial aid to Ukraine. The European Union, often criticized for its slow decision-making and internal divisions, responded with surprising speed and unanimity. Sanctions were imposed on key sectors of the Russian economy, including energy, finance, and technology, signaling a clear rejection of Russia's actions.

Germany, in particular, represented a significant shift in European policy. Historically reluctant to involve itself in military conflicts due to its post-World War II policies, Germany not only supported the imposition of sanctions but also increased its defense spending and supplied Ukraine with military aid. This marked a dramatic departure from previous policies and illustrated the broader shift within Europe toward a more assertive stance against Russian aggression.

The coordinated Western response, including both economic and military support for Ukraine, far exceeded Putin's expectations. The rapid and unified reaction from NATO

countries demonstrated that, rather than fragmenting, the alliance had been invigorated by Russia's actions. Countries that had traditionally maintained neutral stances, such as Finland and Sweden, applied for NATO membership, further expanding the alliance's reach and complicating Russia's strategic position in Europe (Chatham House, 2023).

One of the most damaging miscalculations in Putin's invasion of Ukraine was his overestimation of Russia's ability to withstand the economic sanctions imposed by the West. The Kremlin likely believed that Russia's vast natural resources, particularly its oil and gas exports, would shield it from the worst effects of sanctions. However, the scale and coordination of the sanctions imposed after the invasion proved far more crippling than anticipated.

Almost immediately after the invasion, Western nations imposed sweeping financial sanctions that isolated Russia from the global financial system. Major Russian banks were excluded from the SWIFT international payment network, severely limiting the country's ability to conduct international transactions. The ruble quickly plummeted in value, and Russia's access to its foreign currency reserves, particularly those held in Western countries, was frozen. This severely limited Moscow's ability to stabilize its economy through currency interventions and import subsidies.

The most significant blow, however, came in the form of energy sanctions. Prior to the war, Europe had been Russia's largest market for oil and natural gas exports, providing a substantial portion of the country's revenue. As the conflict progressed, the European Union implemented a partial embargo on Russian oil and began to reduce its dependence on Russian gas. Russia attempted to pivot its energy exports toward Asian markets, particularly China and India, but these new trade relationships came with less favorable terms and lower prices. The loss of European markets dealt a critical blow to Russia's economy, further exacerbating the financial strain caused by sanctions.

Domestically, the economic consequences of the war have been severe. Rising inflation, unemployment, and a decline in the availability of essential goods have eroded public confidence in the government's ability to manage the crisis. While the Kremlin has attempted to control public discontent through state propaganda and the suppression of dissent, the worsening economic situation has made it increasingly difficult to maintain popular support for the war.

Finally, Putin's reliance on China as a key strategic partner has proven to be less effective than anticipated.

Putin's invasion of Ukraine has exposed a series of critical strategic miscalculations that have weakened Russia both domestically and internationally. From underestimating Ukraine's military capabilities and national unity to misjudging the resolve of the West and the power of economic sanctions, these errors have left Russia facing a prolonged conflict with no clear path to victory. The war has not only inflicted severe economic damage on Russia but also led to growing political instability at home and strained its international alliances. As the conflict continues, the long-term consequences of these miscalculations will likely shape Russia's future for years to come.

## References

- Åslund, A. (2019). *Russia's Crony Capitalism: The Path from Market Economy to Kleptocracy*. Yale University Press.
- Blanchette, J. (2022). *China's Calculus on Russia and the Ukraine Conflict*. Center for Strategic and International Studies.
- Bryan, F., Cozad, M. & Stark, A. (2020, September 23) *Understanding the Risk of Escalation in the War in Ukraine*, RAND. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RBA2807-1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RBA2807-1.html)
- Chatham House (2023, June 01) *Seven ways Russia's war on Ukraine has changed the world*. Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2023/02/seven-ways-russias-war-ukraine-has-changed-world>
- The Economist Briefing (2022, October 06) *Ukraine's military success is reshaping Russia as well as the war*, The Economist. <https://www.economist.com/briefing/2022/10/06/ukraines-military-success-is-reshaping-russia-as-well-as-the-war>
- Freedman, L. (2019). *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy*. Oxford University Press.
- Galeotti, M. (2019). *We Need to Talk About Putin: Why the West Gets Him Wrong*. Ebury Press.
- Gros, D. (2022). *The Impact of Sanctions on the Russian Economy: Short-Term Pain, Long-Term Strain*. European Policy Centre.
- Gross, S. & Stelzenmüller C. (2024 June 18) *Europe's messy Russian gas divorce More than two years after Putin's invasion of Ukraine, reliance on Russia for energy lingers*, BROOKINGS. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/europes-messy-russian-gas-divorce/>
- Helmus, T.C. & Holynska, K. (2024 September 03), *Ukrainian Resistance to Russian Disinformation: Lessons for Future Conflict*, RAND. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA2771-1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA2771-1.html)
- Hill, F. (2021). *There Is Nothing for You Here: Finding Opportunity in the Twenty-First Century*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Karl, N. & Habtom, T. (2024, September 05). *Western Seizure of Russian Central Bank Assets Risks Sparking Global Pushback*. *Transnational Litigation Blog*. <https://tlblog.org/western-seizure-of-russian-central-bank-assets-risks-sparking-global-pushback/>
- Kepe, M. & Demus, A. (2023 August 15) *Resisting Russia, Insights into Ukraine's Civilian-Based Actions During the First Four Months of the War in 2022*, RAND. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA2034-1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA2034-1.html)
- Kuzio, T. (2015). *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*. Praeger Security International.
- Lipman, M. (2022). *The Hidden Costs of the War in Ukraine: Domestic Unrest in Russia*. Carnegie Moscow Center.

- Mankoff, J. (2022 April 22). *Russia's War in Ukraine: Identity, History, and Conflict*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, CSIS. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russias-war-ukraine-identity-history-and-conflict>
- Mearsheimer, J.J. (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. W.W. Norton & Company.
- Milov, V. (2024, May 23) *Oil, gas, and war: The effect of sanctions on the Russian energy industry*, *Russia Tomorrow*, Atlantic Council <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/russia-tomorrow/oil-gas-and-war/>
- Prokopenko, A. (2024, June 20). *How the Latest Sanctions Will Impact Russia—and the World*, Carnegie Politika. <https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2024/06/finance-sanctions-russia-currency?lang=en>
- Sherr, J. (2013). *Hard Diplomacy and Soft Coercion: Russia's Influence Abroad*. Chatham House.
- UNHCR. (2024, June 13). *Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2023*. UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency. <https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends-report-2023>
- US Department of State. (2023, June 2). *Russia's Strategic Failure and Ukraine's Secure Future* [Press release]. <https://www.state.gov/russias-strategic-failure-and-ukraines-secure-future/>
- Volkov, D. & Kolesnikov, A. (2023, November 28). *Alternate Reality: How Russian Society Learned to Stop Worrying About the War*, Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2023/11/alternate-reality-how-russian-society-learned-to-stop-worrying-about-the-war?lang=en>

## **Information About the Article/Makale Hakkında Bilgiler**

### **The Ethical Rules for Research and Publication / Arařtırma ve Yayın Etięi**

The author declared that the ethical rules for research and publication followed while preparing the article.

Yazar makale hazırlanırken arařtırma ve yayın etięine uyulduęunu beyan etmiřtir.

### **Conflict of Interests/ ıkar atıřması**

The author has no conflict of interest to declare.

Yazar ıkar atıřması bildirmemiřtir.

### **Grant Support/ Finansal Destek**

The author declared that this study has received no financial support.

Yazar bu alıřma iin finansal destek almadıęını beyan etmiřtir.

### **Author Contributions/ Yazar Katkıları**

The draft process of the manuscript/ Taslaęın Hazırlanma Sreci Y.O., Writing The Manuscript/ Makalenin Yazılması Y.O., Submit, Revision and Resubmit Process/ Bařvuru, Dzeltme ve Yeniden Bařvuru Sreci Y.O.