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**ECOLOGICAL MODERNIZATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION ECONOMY
IN CONDITION OF POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL LIMITS****Igor Horobets*****Andrey Martynov******Abstract**

The history of mankind from a material point of view is a change in technological systems, which determined the forms of organization of economic life. History has recorded many phase crises associated with the transition from one technological mode to another. The key objectives of the EU environmental policy are: combating climate change, ensuring biodiversity, limiting the negative impact of production on human health and quality of life, rational use of natural resources, waste recycling. Environmental policy is a joint competence of the Member States and the EU bodies. The goals of the EU's common agricultural policy are: increasing agricultural productivity, ensuring social protection of farmers, stabilizing agricultural markets, food security, maintaining reasonable consumer prices for agricultural goods, and providing export subsidies. EU countries' strategies for the energy sector are different. France remains a supporter of nuclear energy. Germany is closing down nuclear power plants, necessitating an increase in energy production from thermal power plants and alternative energy sources. Achieving new environmental standards in industry raises questions of socio-political stability, as there is a risk of job losses in the old industrial sectors and the slow creation of new jobs. Such disparities can negatively affect the political support of "green" environmental political parties, especially in the countries of "old" Europe. The political positions of the "greens" in the countries of the "new" Europe are less influential. This fact complicates the formation of a joint environmental group of influence in the EU in order to exert political pressure to implement environmental modernization of the economy. That is, the success of the ecological modernization of the EU economy systematically depends on the internal capacity of elites and European societies to implement this course and on the favorable balance of power in a globalized world.

Keywords: European integration, the European Union, environmental policy, phase transition crisis, Green Party

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**ЕКОЛОГІЧНА МОДЕРНІЗАЦІЯ ЕКОНОМІКИ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО СОЮЗУ
ЗА УМОВ ПОЛІТИЧНИХ І ФІНАНСОВИХ ОБМЕЖЕНЬ****Ігор Горобець***
Андрій Мартинов****Анотація**

У статті зазначається, що історія людства з матеріальної точки зору є зміною технологічних укладів, які визначали форми організації економічного життя. Історія зафіксувала чимало фазових криз, пов'язаних із переходами від одного технологічного укладу до іншого. Ключовими завданнями екологічної політики ЄС визначено: боротьбу зі змінами клімату, забезпечення біологічної різноманітності, обмеження негативного впливу виробництва на здоров'я людей та якість життя, раціональне використання природних ресурсів, переробка відходів. Екологічна політика перебуває у сфері спільної компетенції держав-членів та органів ЄС. Цілями спільної аграрної політики ЄС є: підвищення продуктивності сільського господарства, забезпечення соціального захисту аграріїв, стабілізація ринків аграрної продукції, продовольча безпека, підтримка розумних споживацьких цін на сільськогосподарські товари, надання експортних субсидій. Різними є стратегії країн ЄС щодо енергетичного сектору. Франція залишається прихильницею атомної енергетики. Німеччина закриває атомні станції, що обумовлює потребу збільшення виробництва енергії на теплових станціях та із альтернативних джерел електроенергії.

Досягнення нових екологічних стандартів у промисловості ставить питання соціально-політичної стабільності, адже існує ризик скорочення кількості робочих місць у старих промислових секторах та повільне створення нових. Такі диспропорції можуть негативно позначитись на політичній підтримці «зелених» екологічних політичних партій насамперед у країнах «старої» Європи. Політичні позиції «зелених» у країнах «нової» Європи є менш впливовими. Цей факт ускладнює формування спільної екологічної групи впливу у ЄС з метою політичного тиску з метою реалізації екологічної модернізації економіки. Тобто успішність екологічної модернізації економіки Євросоюзу системно залежить від внутрішньої спроможності еліт і європейських суспільств реалізувати цей курс та від сприятливої розстановки сил у глобалізованому світі.

Ключові слова: європейська інтеграції, Європейський Союз, екологічна політика, криза фазового переходу, партія зелених

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Relevance of the research topic. From a material point of view, the history of mankind is a change in technological systems that determined the forms of organization of economic life. In the past, many phase crises associated with transitions from one technological system to another have been recorded. The most famous are the Neolithic revolution as a transition to the production economy, the industrial revolution, which opened a period of rapid transformations of industrial development. However, already in the early 1960s, the experts of the “Club of Rome” started talking about the limits of economic growth, which are determined by the limit of various resources. At the turn of the 20th-21st centuries experts of the “Davos Economic Forum” talk about the importance of the transition to an ecologically clean economy. Quantitative and qualitative indicators of such transformation are determined by the Paris Agreement of 2015 on the prevention of climate change. However, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021, as well as the escalation of the Russia’s war against Ukraine from February 24, 2022, provoked an increase in the level of inflation and budget deficits in most of the member states of the European Union. The key problem of the ecological modernization of the economy of the European Union countries is the redistribution of financial resources and the stimulation of innovative technologies necessary for the transition to a new economic system. Solving this task depends on political risks and financial constraints. The dialectic of the interaction of these trends determines the success or failure of the ecological modernization of the economies of the European Union states.

Historiographical review. The problems of the study of the economic burden on the economy are highlighted in the classic work of Braudel F. “Material Civilization, Economy and Capitalism. XV-XVIII centuries”. The author gave an example of how the hunting of lions led to an increase in the population of goats in the Levant, which ate the roots of trees in the mountains resulting in an ecological disaster¹. Ecological issues are often subordinated to ideological guidelines in scientific and political discourse. Soros G. considers authoritarianism but not the climate change to be a greater threat to an open society². However, in reality, authoritarian traditions that neglect environmental concerns produce additional challenges to sustainable development.

In the history of the European integration scientific literature records several energy crises that significantly influenced the policy of the European Communities. In the early 1970s, saving energy resources, reducing the share of oil in the energy balance in favor of gas and nuclear energy were defined as ways out of the crisis in the early 1970s. The energy crisis was accompanied by a currency crisis and changes in European financial policy. At the beginning of the 21st century, the European Commission defined a strategy for the

¹ Бродель Ф. Матеріальна цивілізація, економіка і капіталізм. XV-XVIII ст. Том 1: Структура повсякденності: можливе і неможливе. К., 1995. С. 182.

² Сорос Дж. Криза глобального капіталізму. Відкрите суспільство під загрозою. Київ, 1999. С. 15.

development of the EU energy policy in a joint analytical project³. In the mentioned document, problems were set that were not solved until the beginning of the 2020s.

In mid-September 2020, the head of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, reported to the European Parliament “On the State of the European Union”. The report was entitled “Building the world we want to live in: Viable union in a fragile world”⁴. Among the priorities of the European Union for the period up to 2027, the strengthening of environmental policy has been identified in order to bring it into line with the provisions of the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015. The German Green Party insists on a radical transformation of agrarian policy in order to make agricultural activity neutral to the impact of climate change⁵. Ecology activists traditionally pay attention to the challenges that stimulate agricultural production. We remind you that the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union is the oldest common policy under the influence of powerful lobbying structures. The withdrawal of Great Britain from the European Union and the reduction of revenues to the common budget of the EU stimulated speculations about the possibility of transforming the structure of costs for financing the common agricultural policy of the European Union. On October 21, 2020, the ministers of agriculture of the EU member states agreed on the principles of agricultural policy reform. We are talking about the allocation after 2023 of the majority of subsidies to farmers who have agreed to implement ecological standards in their farms⁶. Of course, the efforts of agrarians alone are not enough for the full realization of the innovative priorities of ecologization of the economy of the member states of the European Union. An even more important segment of this policy is the energy sector. The EU plans to radically change the ratio of “clean” and “dirty” electricity production⁷. Measures of ecological modernization of the economy are also aimed at the field of transport, industry, and mining.

Regarding each of these directions, there are significant differences between the positions of government structures and public opinion in the countries of an “old” Europe and a “new” Europe, if the time of accession of a certain country to the European Union is taken as a criterion. Ecological “green” parties are more influential in the old member states of the European Union. There is a risk of a phase transition crisis from the technologies of the industrial structure of the economy to new ecological technologies with the possible digitalization of the economy and the development of robotics in production.

³ Європейська Комісія: Огляд енергетичних потреб Європейської Спільноти до 2010 року. К., 2000. С. 4.

⁴ EU-Kommissionspräsidentin Ursula von der Leyen changiert in Ihrer Rede zur Lage der EU zwischen Zweioptimismus und überraschend deutlichen Ansagen. URL: <https://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/politik/europa/2075408-reden-wir-europa-nicht-schlecht.html>

⁵ Grüne wollen radikalen Umbau der Agrarpolitik. URL: <https://www.deutschlandpolitik.de/eu-gruene-wollen-radikalen-umbau-der-agrarpolitik.1939.de.html>

⁶ EU-Staaten einigen sich auf Agrarreform. URL: <https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article218271184/luxemburg-eu-staaten-einigen-sich-aus-agrarreform.html>

⁷ EU energy in figures. URL: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/99fc30eb-co6d-11e8-9893-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-78277087>

The price of such an innovation may be the aggravation of social contradictions associated with a higher rate of job reduction compared to the creation of new “green” jobs. This state of affairs can provoke the strengthening of political populists and the exacerbation of social and political contradictions⁸. This trend changes the social structure of “post-industrial” European societies and modernizes the agenda of current politics. The large-scale war in the heart of Europe, which acquired a new quality after February 24, 2022, provoked the appearance of additional risks and security challenges. In February 2023, the report of the organizers of the “Munich Conference on International Security” stated the security problems of Ukrainian nuclear plants under conditions of intense hostilities⁹. On the other hand, the introduction of forced economic and energy sanctions of the European Union against the Russian Federation accelerated the transformation of the European energy industry to new parameters of functioning in conditions of global instability.

The purpose of the article is to highlight the peculiarities of the ecological transformation of the economy of the member states of the European Union under the conditions of political and financial restrictions of our time. The main goals of scientific and technical policy are the following: ensuring the quantity and quality of highly qualified workforce, improving the quality of scientific research and its connection with business, creating favorable opportunities for innovation, effective protection of intellectual property. The EU tries to coordinate the national science and technology policy of the member states. However, in terms of the level of development of the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution, the European Union is inferior to the USA and Japan. The European Union remains a world leader in the global fight against climate change. The goal is to become “ecologically neutral” by 2050, that is not to harm the environment. A system of environmental monitoring and information exchange has been created. During the 1990s, ecological policy became a priority area of the EU activity. In 1999, an ecological certification system was introduced for the EU. The key tasks of the EU’s ecological policy are defined as the following: combating climate change, ensuring biological diversity, limiting the negative impact of production on people’s health and quality of life, rational use of natural resources, and waste processing. Ecological policy is in the sphere of joint competence of the member states and the EU bodies.

Common energy policy is an important area of activity of the EU. The European integration began with the coal and nuclear energy industries. But this did not lead to the formation of a common energy policy within the European communities. It was necessary to go through additional stages of building a common market in order to actualize such a need. In 1988, the program of liberalization of the internal energy market of Western European states was adopted. The goal was the formation of a common energy and gas market. Since 1998 this process has moved into the sphere of real politics.

⁸ Dröge Susanne. Zurück in die Zukunft? Die internationale Klimapolitik 2021. Neue Konstellationen für die europäische Klimadiplomatie. SWP-Aktuell. Nr 13, Februar 2021. S. 8.

⁹ «Re: Vision». Munich Security Report. Münich, 2023. S. 74.

In September 2009, the third energy market reform package was adopted. The strategic tasks were defined as simplifying the entry of new energy producers into the market, destroying the monopoly structure of the market, giving the consumer the right to freely choose a supplier, giving third-party companies access to transportation and distribution networks, dividing the functions of the producer, transporter, and supplier of energy services.

Currently, market liberalization is far from ideal. Separate liberalized national markets have been created instead of the single EU energy market. The demonopolization process did not take place, because many EU countries pursue a protectionist policy in the field of energy, and the level of competition is insufficient. As a result, gas and electricity prices vary significantly across the EU member states. In the early 2000s, there was adapted a package of energy and climate measures. The tasks were defined as achieving high efficiency of the sector due to increased competition, environmental stability and resource stability. In 2009, the EU directive on the development of alternative sources of electricity was adopted. The key task is to diversify sources of gas and oil supplies to the EU countries.

EU member states are deeply integrated into the global division of labor. The EU has a differentiated structure of foreign trade. Before the global economic crisis of 2008, EU countries accounted for 36% of world exports and 33% of world imports of machinery and equipment¹⁰. The EU occupies a strong position in the export of aviation equipment and transport engineering. The European Union is also a leading exporter of chemical goods, including pharmaceuticals. Maintains leading positions in the export of agricultural products and in the world trade in services. Almost 70% of trade is in the Common Market. The USA accounts for 21% of exports and 13% of EU imports. China accounts for 16% of imports and only 6% of EU exports. If the EU has a positive balance in trade with the USA, it has a negative balance in trade with China. In 2008, Russia accounted for 11% of EU imports and 8% of EU exports, while, for example, “small” Switzerland accounted for 7% of EU exports and 5% of imports. Japan’s share in EU trade did not exceed 5% at that time¹¹. The tools of the EU’s foreign trade remain the unified customs tariffs and the unified customs policy. The most favored nation regime applies to all member countries of the World Trade Organization. However, in trade with developing countries, the EU uses quantitative restrictions, special protective measures to protect its own producers, anti-dumping measures, subsidizing exports to other countries, special standards and norms.

Environmental policy becomes part of the subsidiarity policy of the European Union, when problems must be solved not only at the level of strategic decision-making, but also in European regions and communities. The regional policy of the EU is designed to consolidate regions into a single integration complex, to ensure a rational combination of common interests with the interests of individual states. There is no goal to completely

¹⁰ Statistics governance and quality framework. URL: <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/html/index.en.html>

¹¹ Import, export and trade in the European Union. URL: https://european-union.europa.eu/live-work-study/import-and-export_en

equalize all regions, because inequality is a characteristic of a market economy and an incentive for development. Funds are not redistributed between regions within the EU, as federal states do. Regions in need of assistance can use EU structural funds. The European Regional Development Fund was established in 1975, the European Social Fund in 1960, the Consolidation Fund and the European Investment Bank in 1993. Operating principles of structural funds: 1) subject and territorial concentration of efforts on the selection of a limited number of areas of activity and selection; 2) multi-year programmatic approach, 3) partnership of authorities at all levels, 4) addition of EU funds to national resources of regional policy. The implementation of the environmental policy of the European Union depends on the effective functioning of this level of government.

The main directions of regional policy are convergence, that is, promoting the development of territories with a low level of well-being, competitiveness, helping territories with structural problems, developing human capital, combating long-term unemployment, and creating professional retraining centers. Socio-economic convergence is the second expenditure item of the EU common budget after agrarian policy. In the 2007–2013 budget, 300 billion euros were spent on these needs¹². After the EU enlargement in 2004, 2007, 2013, it was decided that the amount of financial assistance cannot exceed 4% of the gross domestic product, otherwise inflation can be accelerated and disparities in the national budgets of the new EU member states can be created. As a result of the expansion, Poland became the main recipient of aid under these funds. Large expenditures go to Italy, East Germany, Portugal, Greece, the Czech Republic, and Hungary.

The goals of the common agricultural policy of the EU are the following: to increase the productivity of agriculture, to ensure social protection of farmers, to stabilize agricultural product markets, food security, to maintain reasonable consumer prices for agricultural products, and provide export subsidies. For this purpose, in 1962, the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund was created. The guarantee sector purchases products from farmers at fixed prices, maintains intervention stocks, and subsidizes exports. The orientation section solves the structural tasks of the industry, i.e. rationalization of production, protection of soils, improvement of product quality and guarantees of its sales. This system was fully implemented in July 1968. In 1988, an attempt was made to limit overproduction. Farmers began to receive subsidies for refusing from growing certain types of products. The accession to the EU of agrarian countries such as Poland actualized the task of reforming the common agrarian policy. A system of targeted subsidies to farmers was introduced in order to stimulate the reduction of the area of cultivated land, the reduction of the intensity of their use and the reduction of the volume of agricultural products.

During 1993–2003, subsidy costs decreased from 26 to 10 billion euros, and export subsidies from 10 to 3 billion euros. However, the agricultural sector of the countries that became EU members in 2004 and 2007 is less profitable, and prices for agricultural

¹² Pew Research of European Union. URL: <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/10/14/the-european-union/>

products are lower than in the EU-15 member countries. Moreover, many Central European farmers could not sell their products due to their non-compliance with EU standards. It was decided that the amount of subsidies depends on compliance with labor standards on the farm, use of land use standards, animal husbandry conditions, safety and quality of products. By 2013, expenditures on subsidies were reduced by 30%. At that time, there were 21 organized agricultural markets in the EU (most important grains, meat, dairy products, fruits and vegetables, wine, sugar)¹³. The issues of increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector (modernization of production and human capital) are being resolved, the agricultural environment and landscapes are being improved, as well as the quality of life in the villages. The reform of the common agricultural policy of the European Union for the budget period until 2027 will be focused on this. However, the adoption of this budget strategy is complicated by many crisis factors. Until the final summing up of the results of the presidential elections in the USA, the fate of the trade agreement between Great Britain and the European Union remained uncertain. British Prime Minister B. Johnson congratulated J. Biden on his victory in the elections on November 3, 2020, even before recognizing the defeat of D. Trump. The victory of the candidate of the Democratic Party made the British position more compromising on the new trade agreement with the EU. Completion of the withdrawal procedure of Great Britain deprived the common budget of the EU of significant revenues. The corresponding sequestration was waiting for the expenditure articles of the budget. Subsidies to farmers have become smaller in countries that have become members of the European Union relatively recently¹⁴. There is a need to find a package compromise regarding the draft EU budget until 2027. That is, the successful ecological modernization of the economy of the member states of the European Union depends both on the financial resource support for the implementation of overdue reforms, and on the positioning of the European Union in the world. On February 9–10, 2023, the EU summit debated the plan for the ecological modernization of the economy, taking into account the increase in subsidies in the USA. The question of whether the European Union will have enough funds to solve environmental problems and the forced increase in military spending remains open.

Conclusions. The ecological modernization of the economy of the member states of the European Union is associated with the risks of a phase transition crisis from one economic structure to another. This transition has its socio-political price and complications. The key criteria for the success or failure of this project are the reform of the common agricultural policy of the European Union, the achievement of high environmental standards in the energy sector, transport and industry. By the end of 2020, a compromise was reached regarding the revision of the agricultural policy of the European Union. EU countries' strategies for the energy sector are different. France remains a

¹³ Heydemann Günter, Vodicka Karel (Hrsg.). Vom Ostblock zur EU. Systemtransformationen 1990–2012 im Vergleich. Göttingen, 2013. S. 280.

¹⁴ Грубінко А.В., Мартинов А.Ю. Європейський Союз після BREXIT: продовження історії. Тернопіль, 2021. С. 161.

supporter of nuclear energy. Germany is closing nuclear plants, which causes the need to increase energy production at thermal plants and from alternative sources of electricity. Achieving new environmental standards in industry poses a question of social and political stability, as there is a risk of job cuts in old industrial sectors and slow creation of new jobs. Such disproportions can negatively affect the political support of “green” environmental political parties, primarily in the countries of an “old” Europe. The political positions of the “green” in the countries of an “new” Europe are less influential. This fact complicates the formation of a joint environmental group of influence in the EU for the purpose of political pressure in order to implement ecological modernization of the economy. The question of strengthening or weakening the competitiveness of the economy of the European Union is open, if ecological modernization will be carried out only by the European Union, and not by other economic centers, such as China, the USA, India, Japan. In October 2020, the Fifth Plenum of the CPC Central Committee approved the 14th five-year plan for 2021–2025 and the strategy until 2035 under the conditions of self-reliance and external openness. China is not ready to spend as much as the European Union on the ecological modernization of the Chinese economy, because the costs of maintaining the socio-political stability of Chinese society remain large. Joseph Biden will return the United States to the Paris Climate Agreement. However, the question of whether there is a general American political consensus regarding the rapid ecological modernization of the American economy remains open. The experience of D. Trump’s presidency in 2017–2020 proved the fact of stimulating the American economy at the expense of abandoning the standards of international ecological agreements. That is, the success of the ecological modernization of the European Union’s economy systematically depends on the internal ability of elites and European society to implement this course and on a favorable balance of forces in the globalized world.

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