

II. АКТУАЛЬНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ СУСПІЛЬНОЇ ГЕОГРАФІЇ ТА КРАЇНОЗНАВСТВА

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*ВОЄННЕ ПОВСЯКДЕННЯ ПРИКОРДОННЯ ЧЕРНІГІВСЬКОЇ ОБЛАСТІ: ПРАКТИКИ БЕЗПЕКИ
ТА СОЦІАЛЬНО-КУЛЬТУРНІ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЇ*

Мета. Стаття має на меті проаналізувати повсякденні практики безпеки мешканців прикордонних громад Чернігівської області та визначити їхній вплив на соціально-культурні трансформації в умовах воєнних загроз і перспектив післявоєнного відновлення.

Методика. Дослідження виконано в межах суспільно-географічного підходу з поєднанням кількісних і якісних методів. Емпіричну основу становить анкетне опитування мешканців Семенівської та Новгород-Сіверської міських територіальних громад Чернігівської області, що включало шкальні та множинні запитання. Аналіз даних здійснено з використанням описової статистики та порівняльного аналізу. Практики, що не вимірювалися прямими шкальними показниками, інтерпретовано на основі частотності згадувань і повторюваності відповідей у множинних запитаннях.

Результати. Засвідчено, що воєнне повсякдення прикордонних громад формується як стійкий режим життя з інтегрованістю відчуття загрози у щоденні рішення та планування. Виявлено домінування просторових адаптацій (зміна маршрутів пересування, орієнтація на укриття, переосмислення безпечних і небезпечних зон), розвиток практик автономної готовності (запаси ресурсів, підготовка документів та речей, адаптація житла), а також посилення інформаційних практик безпеки, де ключову роль поряд з офіційними каналами відіграють локальні комунікаційні мережі та особисті спостереження. Зафіксовано зміни у соціальних взаємодіях: посилення горизонтальних зв'язків, зростання ролі сусідських мереж і готовність до взаємодопомоги як елементів локальної стійкості. Виявлено, що вік впливає не на наявність адаптації, а на домінуючі моделі реалізації практик безпеки (перевага інформаційних каналів у молодших групах і матеріально-підготовчих практик у старших).

Наукова новизна. Наукова новизна полягає у виявленні повсякденних практик безпеки як одного з механізмів соціально-культурних трансформацій прикордонних громад у воєнний період. Рутинізація практик безпеки, зміна просторової поведінки та розвиток неформальних мереж взаємодопомоги формують нову логіку воєнного повсякдення прикордоння.

Практична значимість. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані у розробці регіональних підходів до підтримки та відновлення прикордонних громад в умовах тривалих воєнних загроз і післявоєнного розвитку. Отримані висновки є релевантними для просторового планування, програм локальної адаптації та безпекової політики з урахуванням реальних повсякденних практик населення. Матеріали роботи мають значення для органів місцевого самоврядування, регіональних органів влади та дослідників прикордонних територій.

Ключові слова: прикордонні громади, воєнне повсякдення, повсякденні практики безпеки, соціально-культурні трансформації, локальна стійкість.

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*WARTIME EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE CHERNIHIV REGION BORDERLANDS: SECURITY PRACTICES
AND SOCIO-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS*

Purpose. The purpose of the article is to analyse everyday security practices of residents of border communities in the Chernihiv region and to determine their influence on socio-cultural transformations under conditions of wartime threats and in the context of post-war recovery prospects.

Methods. The research is conducted within a human-geographical framework, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The empirical basis consists of a questionnaire survey of residents of the Semenivka and Novhorod-Siversk urban territorial communities of the Chernihiv region, which included scaled and multiple-choice questions. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics and comparative analysis. Practices that were not measured through direct scale indicators were interpreted based on the frequency of mentions and the recurrence of responses in multiple-choice questions.

Results. The findings demonstrate that the wartime everyday life of border communities is formed as a stable mode of living, in which the perception of threat is integrated into daily decision-making and planning. The dominance of spatial adaptations was identified, including changes in mobility routes, orientation towards shelters, and the redefinition of safe and unsafe zones. The development of practices of autonomous preparedness (resource stockpiling, preparation of documents and essential items, and a adaptation of housing) was observed, along with the intensification of informational security practices, where local communication networks and personal observations play a key role alongside official channels. Changes in social interactions were also recorded, manifested in strengthened horizontal ties, the growing role of neighbourhood networks, and a high readiness for mutual assistance as elements of local resilience. It was established that age does not affect the presence of adaptation itself, but rather the dominant modes of implementing security practices, with younger groups prioritising informational channels and older groups relying more on material preparedness.

Scientific novelty. The scientific novelty of the research lies in identifying everyday security practices as one of the mechanisms driving socio-cultural transformations in border communities during the wartime period. The routinisation of security, changes in spatial behaviour, and the development of informal networks of mutual assistance form a new logic of wartime everyday life in border areas.

The practical significance. The results of the research can be used in developing regional approaches to supporting and restoring border communities under conditions of prolonged wartime threats and post-war development. The findings are relevant for spatial planning, local adaptation programmes, and security-related policies that take into account actual everyday practices of the population. The materials are of practical value for local self-government bodies, regional authorities, and researchers focusing on border territories.

Keywords: border communities, wartime everyday life, everyday security practices, socio-cultural transformations, local resilience.

Introduction. Border areas are traditionally characterised by heightened vulnerability, as they combine features of peripherality and institutional instability and, in conditions of war and direct proximity to an aggressor state, become spaces of permanent concentration of threats. In this context, the border territories of the Chernihiv region belong to the most vulnerable areas, where wartime threats are not merely present but are deeply integrated into everyday life and social practices.

This research focuses on border communities of the Chernihiv region that are officially classified as territories of active hostilities, where combat engagements, shelling, and other wartime risks are prolonged and recurrent. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion in 2022, the population of these communities has been living under conditions of constant tension and uncertainty, which has led to the formation of a regime of continuous readiness for risk and has significantly transformed behavioural strategies, social relations, and interactions with space.

It is precisely under such conditions that wartime everyday life emerges as a specific complex of daily practices oriented towards survival, adaptation to threats, and the pursuit of attainable security within an environment of persistently elevated risk. In the borderland context, these practices intersect with a range of broader social, cultural, and economic processes, from the transformation of social infrastructure to the rethinking of regional identity, collectively shaping a new configuration of everyday life.

Security constitutes a central element of wartime everyday life in border communities, forming an integrated system that encompasses a wide spectrum of population activities, ranging from changes in mobility routes and the arrangement of shelters to participation in local communication networks, mutual assistance, and informal warning systems. Although these practices are not unique to Ukraine's wartime realities, their embedding within specific local and regional challenges produces a new internal logic of borderland life, redefines the role of space, and transforms traditional perceptions of border areas as mere peripheries.

As a result, wartime everyday life and security practices become integral components of broader socio-cultural transformations. They affect the nature of everyday routines, modify established daily practices, reshape social interactions, strengthen mechanisms of mutual support, and contribute to the formation of new collective understandings of risk, territory, and boundaries. Importantly, the population of border communities in the Chernihiv region cannot be regarded as passive observers of wartime events. On the contrary, local communities actively adapt, develop localized practices of resilience, and construct new models of interaction with their environment. These changes reflect both transformations in spatial behaviour and deeper socio-cultural shifts, manifested in the redefinition of security boundaries, the emergence of war-conditioned spaces, and the reconfiguration of everyday social practices and mutual assistance. In this sense, the borderland appears not only as a zone of risk, but also as a dynamic socio-cultural environment that simultaneously adapts to wartime challenges and transforms its internal socio-spatial processes.

Purpose of the article. Accordingly, the purpose of the research is to analyse the everyday security practices of residents of border communities in the Chernihiv region and to determine their influence on socio-cultural transformations occurring during the wartime period and in the context of post-war recovery. The research is aimed at identifying how wartime everyday life and related adaptive strategies reshape daily life, social interactions, and ways of interpreting space among the population of border areas. Under conditions of prolonged wartime threats, everyday practices of the population become key indicators of social adaptation, local resilience, and the transformation of the social environment, which determines the relevance of this research. Examining the processes of wartime everyday life makes it possible to capture changes taking place within border communities and to identify the mechanisms through which new social norms, behavioural models, and forms of interaction with space are formed. This renders the research of wartime everyday life and security practices important not only for the academic understanding of borderlands, but also for the development of effective strategies to support border territories in their future development.

Within this research framework, the following **objectives** are formulated:

- to identify and describe key everyday security practices that have emerged among residents of border areas during the wartime period;
- to analyse survey results in order to determine the characteristics of wartime everyday life and the specificity of adaptive strategies;
- to examine the impact of everyday security practices on socio-cultural transformations in border communities, particularly changes in local behavioural models, social ties, and communication;
- to assess how wartime everyday life transforms perceptions of space, borders, risks, and everyday interactions between residents and their environment;
- to determine the role of local communities and informal networks of mutual assistance in maintaining security and fostering social resilience under conditions of persistent threat.

Analysis of recent research and publications. In the context of this research, the key concepts include border territories, wartime everyday life, everyday security practices, as well as theoretical frameworks addressing socio-cultural transformations and socio-spatial resilience. Conceptual elaboration of these notions is necessary for interpreting the survey results and for addressing the research objectives.

In contemporary human geography, the concept of borderlands encompasses not only formally defined “border strips” or “controlled areas” established by legislation, but also broader socio-spatial formations. In the works of D. Newman, A. Paasi, T. Wilson, and H. Donnan, borderlands are conceptualised as multi-layered zones where cultural, social, economic, demographic, and identity-related processes intersect, and where the border itself performs functions of barrier, contact, and transformation (Newman, 2006; Paasi, 1998; Donnan & Wilson, 1999). Within this framework, the concept of bordering has developed, referring to the ongoing social construction, redefinition, and maintenance of borders in political, social, and cultural dimensions (Newman, 2006). Bordering contrasts with earlier notions of a “borderless world”, grounded in ideas of globalisation and deterritorialisation (Ohmae, 1990; Giddens, 1999). In the context of the Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, these approaches are complemented by the concept of rebordering, which involves the strengthening of border control, changes in mobility, and the growing significance of borders as zones of danger and, simultaneously, as symbolic boundaries that profoundly shape residents’ perceptions of space and territory (O’Dowd, 2002; Zhurzhenko, 2024).

Another key component of the theoretical and methodological framework of this research is the concept of wartime everyday life and everyday security practices, which acquire particular relevance in the context of war. Wartime everyday life can be defined as a mode of living in which military threat becomes the background of daily practices. In contemporary humanities and geographical research, wartime everyday life is understood as a dynamic set of practices of adaptation, survival, planning, and interaction shaped by conditions of danger (Das, 2007; Gregory, 2011). Within this concept, particular attention should be paid to the notion of everyday security practices developed by S. Koopman. Through everyday security practices, individuals construct security not at the institutional level, but through daily actions, mutual assistance, communication, observation, and the use of local knowledge (Koopman, 2011; 2014). This approach directly reflects the lived realities of border communities in the Chernihiv region during the war. Another important theoretical block concerns studies of the militarisation of space and security regimes, notably represented in the works of S. Graham. In *Cities Under Siege: The New Military Urbanism*, Graham analyses how war and security threats reshape urban and regional spaces by creating new regimes of movement, control, and everyday interaction. Although Graham primarily focuses on urban contexts, his

concept of military urbanism is also relevant for border rural areas, where war similarly transforms routes, infrastructure, information networks, and everyday practices of the population.

Special attention is also given to the category of socio-cultural transformations, which draws on the theoretical contributions of D. Massey, Y.-F. Tuan, as well as Ukrainian scholars of space such as H. Kulieshova, K. Mezentsev, N. Provotar, and L. Niemets. Socio-cultural transformations are understood as complex changes in spatial practices, forms of social interaction, local norms, and social institutions that arise under the influence of structural challenges, among which the challenges of wartime everyday life play a decisive role. In this context, the concept of resilience serves as an important analytical complement and is widely applied in studies of socio-spatial systems in crisis and post-crisis conditions (Adger, 2000; Norris et al., 2008). Social and territorial resilience is interpreted not only as the ability of communities to withstand challenges, but also as a process of active adaptation, reinterpretation of risks, transformation of everyday practices, and restoration of interaction with space under prolonged instability. Research on spatial resilience emphasises that everyday practices, local knowledge, informal networks of interaction, and the capacity for collective action play a key role in shaping territorial resilience (Cutter et al., 2008; Vale & Campanella, 2005).

Thus, socio-cultural transformations of border communities during the wartime period are best analysed through the interaction of wartime everyday life, security practices, and resilience. This perspective makes it possible to assess how perceptions of space, borders, risks, and everyday interactions with the environment are transformed. Taken together, these approaches form the theoretical framework of the research, with particular emphasis on analysing how wartime everyday life functions as a driver of socio-cultural transformations in border territories.

Methods. The research is based on a combination of classical human-geographical approaches and quantitative social research methods, which allows for a comprehensive analysis of wartime everyday life in border communities and everyday security practices formed under conditions of persistent risk. The empirical basis of the research consists of a questionnaire survey conducted among 80 respondents who permanently or periodically reside in the Semenivka and Novhorod-Siversk urban territorial communities of the Chernihiv region, areas that are among the most vulnerable to wartime threats.

The questionnaire included scaled and multiple-choice questions, which made it possible to record the prevalence of specific practices, assess the intensity of risk perception, and identify general trends in adaptive behaviour under wartime conditions. A five-point scale was used to evaluate the significance of individual factors and practices, responses rated as “important” and “very important” were combined for the purpose of analysing the prevalence of the respective practices.

In addition to indicators directly measured through scaled and closed-ended questions, the research employed an analysis of the frequency of mentions and the recurrence of patterns in multiple-choice responses. Practices that regularly appeared in the answers of a substantial share of respondents, were repeated across different sections of the questionnaire, and formed stable combinations of responses were interpreted as dominant or widespread. This approach makes it possible to consider everyday security practices not only through direct quantitative indicators, but also as a structured social experience manifested in recurrent forms of adaptive behaviour.

Overall, the structure of the questionnaire was designed to analyse forms of everyday security practices, features of spatial behaviour, changes in social ties, and the nature of residents' interaction with the local environment under conditions of constant danger.

The spatial interpretation of the collected data draws on vulnerability and risk analysis approaches developed in the works of S. Cutter, which makes it possible to assess how territorial differences and proximity to zones of military threat influence the formation of everyday strategies of adaptation and security. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics and comparative analysis, allowing wartime everyday life to be interpreted as a set of recurring actions, routines, and strategies captured through standardised responses. This methodological approach enables the conceptualisation of everyday security practices as a structured social experience reflecting collective forms of adaptation and response to threat.

Results. The results of the survey indicate that the wartime everyday life of border communities in the Chernihiv region is formed as a stable mode of living in which the perception of danger is integrated into daily practices and decision-making processes. An overwhelming majority of respondents (96,3%) reported living under conditions of constant threat, and the same proportion (96,3%) confirmed that the feeling of danger directly influences their everyday decisions and the planning of mobility. This points to

a deep integration of the wartime factor into everyday life in border areas and to the formation of a specific logic of action in which security becomes the primary behavioural framework.

One of the key manifestations of wartime everyday life is spatial adaptation and the reconfiguration of mobility. According to the survey results, 87,5% of respondents changed or partially changed their mobility routes for security reasons. Regular attention to the availability of shelters during movement was reported by 43,8% of respondents, while an additional 30% indicated that they do so frequently. These changes confirm that, under wartime conditions, space is perceived not as a neutral environment but as a set of potential risks requiring constant assessment. Alongside spatial changes, a set of practices of autonomous preparedness emerges, aimed at securing basic needs under conditions of uncertainty. Respondents' answers are dominated by references to stockpiling water and essential goods, preparing documents or necessary items, and arranging relatively safe places within the home. The frequency with which these practices appear in multiple-choice and open-ended responses indicates their routinisation and stable character, allowing them to be interpreted as dominant elements of everyday adaptation to wartime threats.

Informational security practices constitute another important component of wartime everyday life. According to the survey, 78,8% of respondents consider official state resources to be an important or very important source of information about danger, and the same share (78,8%) rely on local chats and messaging platforms. At the same time, personal observation plays a key role: 91,3% of respondents indicated that sensory signals (sounds, visual observations, situational markers) are an important or very important channel for interpreting risk. This finding is consistent with Sara Koopman's approach to everyday security practices, in which security is constructed through daily actions, local knowledge, and individual "readings" of space rather than exclusively through institutional mechanisms.

Table 1. Prevalence of key everyday security practices among residents of border communities in the Chernihiv region (source: compiled by the authors)

<i>Group of practices</i>	<i>Specific manifestations of security practices</i>	<i>Share of respondents / mode of identification</i>
Spatial adaptation and mobility	Change or partial change of mobility routes	87,5%
	Regular orientation toward the availability of shelters	43,8%
	Frequent attention to shelters	30%
	Avoidance of specific areas perceived as potentially dangerous	Confirmed through multiple-choice responses*
Material preparedness and autonomous readiness	Stockpiling water and essential goods	Dominant practice
	Prepared documents and essential items	Widespread practice
	Arrangement of a relatively safe place within the home	Widespread practice
Informational security practices	Reliance on official state resources	78,8%
	Monitoring local chats and messaging platforms	78,8%
	Personal observations (sounds, visual signals)	91,3%
Everyday planning	Participation in informal support networks	Predominantly confirmed in responses
	Adjustment of daily decisions and plans with regard to security considerations	95%

**The terms "dominant practice", "widespread practice", and "predominantly confirmed" are used for practices that were not measured through direct scale indicators but were identified on the basis of frequency of mentions, recurrence across multiple-choice responses, and analysis of open-ended comments.*

Behavioural changes are accompanied by noticeable social transformations. A significant share of respondents stated that their community as a whole has adapted to living under conditions of constant danger, and 95% confirmed their readiness to seek help from neighbours or acquaintances in the event of a threat. This points to the strengthening of horizontal networks of mutual assistance and solidarity, which function as an informal security infrastructure and represent an important element of social resilience in border communities. Wartime everyday life also substantially transforms perceptions of territory and the organisation of time. Most respondents agreed that the war has changed their attitude toward their place of residence, the structure of the day, everyday habits, and the planning of daily activities. This reflects a shift from a relatively neutral perception of space to a risk-oriented form of everyday life, in which territory is understood as a space of potential threats requiring continuous evaluation and adaptation. A synthesised overview of the spatial, material, informational, and social security practices that shape the wartime everyday life of border communities is presented in Table 1.

Across age groups, no fundamental differences in the basic perception of danger were identified. The wartime factor appears to be decisive for the vast majority of respondents regardless of age. At the same time, differences are observed in the forms of adaptation employed. Younger respondents tend to rely more on informational channels and digital means of communication, whereas older respondents more often prioritise practices of material preparedness and local support. Respondents of middle age demonstrate mixed strategies, combining spatial, informational, and preparatory practices. Thus, age influences not the presence of adaptation itself, but rather the dominant modes through which security practices are implemented.

Alongside the dominant trends, the findings allow for the identification of several atypical yet indicative aspects of wartime everyday life in border communities. In particular, despite the near-universal integration of the perception of danger into everyday decision-making, a substantial share of respondents does not demonstrate constant spatial vigilance in the form of regular orientation toward shelters: only 43,8% reported paying attention to shelters on a regular basis, while an additional 30% do so frequently. This may indicate the emergence of adaptive strategies in which continuous spatial alertness is replaced by a more generalised, “background” sense of risk and automatised behavioural patterns. Such routinisation of danger reflects not a reduction in threat levels, but rather a transformation in how threats are experienced and managed in everyday life.

Another indicative feature is the coexistence of a high level of autonomous preparedness with a relatively limited emphasis on formalised institutional security mechanisms. Although official state resources remain an important source of information, personal observations and local communication networks play a key role in risk perception. This suggests a shift from institution-centred models of security toward practices grounded in local knowledge, embodied experience, and direct “reading” of space, an important but not always explicitly articulated characteristic of wartime everyday life. Furthermore, atypical for crisis-affected territories is the high level of declared readiness for mutual assistance, which does not coincide with a weakening of individual security strategies. This points not to a substitution of personal responsibility by collective action, but to their parallel functioning: individual practices of autonomous preparedness coexist with well-developed horizontal networks of support. Such a combination of individual and collective adaptation forms a specific model of local resilience that goes beyond classical interpretations of community responses to threat.

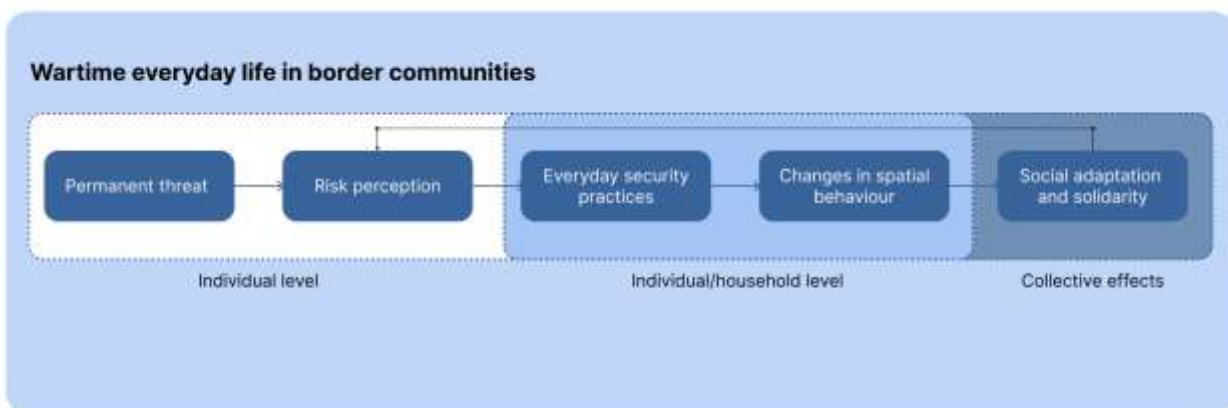


Figure 1. The Logic of Wartime Everyday Life (source: compiled by the authors)

The synthesis of the results makes it possible to reconstruct the internal logic of wartime everyday life in the border communities of the Chernihiv region as a multi-level and cyclical process. Within this process, a persistent threat shapes stable models of risk perception at the individual level, which in turn drive the development of everyday security practices and changes in spatial behaviour at the household level. These changes subsequently generate collective effects of social adaptation and solidarity, which further influence the ongoing experience of risk and the stabilisation of everyday living regimes. This logic, derived from the empirical data of the questionnaire survey, is summarised in Figure 1.

Overall, the results of the research indicate the formation of a complex wartime everyday life in the border areas of the Chernihiv region, in which individual security practices are combined with developed informal networks of mutual assistance and adaptive strategies. These processes transform everyday behaviour, social relations, informational practices, and perceptions of space, allowing the borderland to be understood not only as a zone of vulnerability, but as a dynamic socio-cultural environment with a high potential for local resilience.

Conclusions. The conducted research made it possible to develop a comprehensive understanding of the wartime everyday life of residents of border communities in the Chernihiv region and to demonstrate that everyday security practices constitute one of the key mechanisms of socio-cultural transformations in the region. The findings confirm that the condition of permanent threat functions not as a situational background but as a structural factor shaping daily behavioural strategies of the population. These strategies include mobility routes, time planning, the organisation of living space, and patterns of interaction with the surrounding environment.

The combination of identified practices, such as information monitoring, resource stockpiling, the arrangement of relatively safe places within dwellings, and sensory responses to sounds and other situational signals, forms a stable set of adaptive actions. Together, these actions define an internal “logic of action” under wartime conditions. In this sense, wartime everyday life emerges not as a chaotic reaction to threats but as an ordered system of decisions reproduced through regular everyday behavioural routines.

An important outcome of the research is the identification of changes in social interactions and local support networks. The strengthening of horizontal ties, the growing role of neighbourly contacts, and residents’ readiness to rely on one another in situations of danger indicate the formation and consolidation of mechanisms of local resilience. These findings are consistent with approaches in human geography and studies of spatial vulnerability, which emphasise that community resilience under crisis conditions is determined not only by infrastructural characteristics but also by the quality of social capital, capacities for self-organisation, and the maintenance of horizontal networks of mutual assistance.

In the case of border communities in the Chernihiv region, wartime threats have acted as a catalyst for the activation of local social systems. Within these systems, information exchange, mutual support, and practices of assistance acquire key importance for everyday security. Spatial transformations identified in the research are no less significant. Changes in mobility routes, increased attention to shelters, the redefinition of safe and unsafe zones, the emergence of informal “safety corridors,” and the adaptation of housing to risk conditions indicate a reconfiguration of the perception of the place of residence.

Border territories increasingly come to be understood as spaces requiring constant navigation and risk assessment. Space thus ceases to function as a neutral backdrop and becomes an active factor in shaping everyday practices. In this respect, war transforms not only the intensity of threats but also the ways in which space is used, navigated, and incorporated into daily decision-making.

The results of the research are relevant for further human-geographical research on border territories and for applied approaches to supporting populations under conditions of prolonged threats and future recovery. Promising directions for further research include the analysis of the temporal dynamics of wartime everyday life, the research of local community resilience and the capacity to sustain networks of mutual assistance under prolonged crisis conditions, comparative analyses of security practices across different border regions of Ukraine, and the development of practical recommendations aimed at supporting psychological, social, and spatial security in the post-war period.

Overall, the wartime everyday life of border communities in the Chernihiv region demonstrates that everyday security practices function not only as responses to threat but also as mechanisms through which new social norms, behavioural models, and structures of local interaction are formed. As such, they represent one of the key drivers of broader socio-cultural transformations in the borderland, the significance of which is likely to persist in the post-war development of these territories.

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