



Vitalii Hramotniev,
Andrii Buriachenko,
Tetiana Obolenska,
Pavlo Logvinov

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORK FOR POST-CONFLICT ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF COUNTRIES WITHIN THE PARADIGM OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The object of research is post-conflict economic recovery as a component of international economic relations, encompassing interactions among donors, recipients, international organizations, and foreign investors. One of the most problematic aspects is the excessive simplification of this phenomenon within technocratic or narrowly disciplinary approaches, which leads to the neglect of political, social, institutional, and cultural factors, as well as the deep-rooted contradictions underlying the conflict. Existing concepts are unable to fully reflect the complexity of the recovery process and the risks of conflict relapse, particularly in conditions of political uncertainty and limited state capacity.

The research employed methods of interdisciplinary analysis, content analysis of scholarly sources and normative-institutional documents, critical review of the limitations of current approaches, and inductive generalization for the development of a new conceptual framework. This enabled a systematic comparison of three leading academic approaches – conflict studies, institutional economics, and transition theory – in their interpretations of the key categories: “post-conflict”, “economy”, and “recovery”.

As a result, an updated interdisciplinary analytical framework was developed, within which post-conflict recovery is understood as a multidimensional process of transformation unfolding within a space of fundamental contradictions: order / chaos, old / new, justice / injustice. This is due to the fact that the proposed model enables the integration of economic, institutional, and social dimensions, moving beyond the linear logic of reconstruction in favor of a flexible and context-sensitive approach.

This framework makes it possible to develop recovery strategies that are adapted to local conditions, enhance trust, legitimacy, and inclusion, and reduce the risks of conflict recurrence. Compared to existing well-known concepts, it offers such advantages as greater adaptability, multidimensionality, and practical relevance for international economic policy in the context of post-conflict transformations and the complex social legacy of war.

Keywords: FDI, post-conflict economic recovery, finance, financial instruments, international economic relations.

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1. Introduction

In the contemporary world marked by the persistence of armed conflicts and the urgent need for rebuilding war-torn societies, post-conflict economic recovery has emerged as a critically important subject of scientific inquiry. The growing number of countries facing the challenge of reconstruction underscores the practical relevance of studying recovery not only as a set of economic policies, but as a comprehensive and multidimensional process. Scientific reflection on this process is crucial for developing effective tools that can guide real-world policy and investment decisions during fragile transitions from conflict to peace.

Post-conflict economic recovery is not only a complex and multidimensional socio-economic process, but also one of the key objects of research within the field of international economic relations.

It encompasses the transformation of global aid, donor coordination, foreign investment, and the development of new policies and mechanisms for integration into the global economic space. In this context, an interdisciplinary understanding of the nature of the post-conflict condition becomes a prerequisite for effective resource mobilization, meaningful institutional reform, and the restoration of trust. In order to develop such a comprehensive understanding, this article is intentionally positioned within the domain of theoretical and conceptual research. Rather than offering immediate empirical prescriptions, it aims to establish an integrated interdisciplinary framework that will serve as a foundation for future applied analyses and policy assessments.

Moreover, war leaves behind not only physical destruction but also deep structural, social, and institutional distortions that cannot be addressed through standard macroeconomic policy instruments.

Contemporary approaches to recovery are often reduced to a technocratic logic – macroeconomic stabilization, aid management, GDP growth. However, the neglect of political, conflict-generating, and moral factors leads to ineffective policies, diminished legitimacy of reforms, and the reproduction of tensions.

Foreign investment occupies a special place in recovery processes. It not only provides access to resources but also serves as a crucial tool for establishing new rules, shaping the institutional landscape, and strengthening trust. Yet, without a deep understanding of post-conflict dynamics, investment flows risk exacerbating inequality or entrenching old conflict-generating practices. Historical experience shows that successful recovery is not based on the mechanical repetition of pre-war models, but on a critical rethinking of the roots of conflict, institutional renewal, and public engagement. Such an approach implies transformation – not only of the economy but also of the mechanisms of participation, legitimacy, and distribution.

At the present stage, the concept of post-conflict economic recovery has attracted the attention of both academic researchers and international organizations. In a key policy paper by the World Bank [1], this process is interpreted as an orderly transition to peace through the restoration of infrastructure, key institutions, and economic activity. The document emphasizes a phased technocratic approach focused on macroeconomic stability, rehabilitation of the basic functions of the state, and institutional effectiveness. At the same time, the social, political, and cultural dimensions remain less covered in this model.

The International Monetary Fund also adheres to a technocratic vision in its practice. The primary focus is placed on fiscal stabilization, strengthening institutions, and attracting investment [2]. According to the analysis [3], institutional quality – particularly constraints on executive power – plays a decisive role in ensuring effective recovery. This position affirms the IMF's orientation toward institutional and macroeconomic governability, although humanitarian and social factors remain secondary.

The European Commission in its terminology mainly draws on concepts developed by other organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank [4]. A distinctive feature of its approach lies in its aspiration toward an integrated interpretation of the term “post-conflict recovery”, which encompasses both physical reconstruction and institutional transformation.

A more interdisciplinary and comprehensive vision is demonstrated in the documents of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [5, 6]. These documents view the post-conflict period as a phase of fragile equilibrium, in which economic recovery must take into account the risks of renewed violence, the need for institutional renewal, the development of civic participation, and the creation of inclusive political and economic institutions. The most elaborate conceptual framework is offered by the United Nations Development Programme, which argues that a country's post-conflict status cannot be defined solely by formal criteria [7]. The key element becomes progress toward stabilization, reconciliation, reform, and institutional legitimacy.

These approaches show that international organizations operate under different operational mandates and analytical paradigms. On the one hand, technocratic models provide clarity in implementation and macroeconomic discipline. On the other hand, comprehensive and interdisciplinary perspectives make it possible to address a broader range of challenges, including social integration, institutional renewal, and the resolution of root causes of conflict.

Academic approaches to the analysis of post-conflict economic recovery likewise reveal a diversity of positions. The paper [8] emphasizes the need to view recovery as a multidimensional transition that includes not only economic but also socio-cultural and political components. It highlights the importance of reintegration, restoration of trust, and the participation of local communities, while warning against a simplified return to the pre-war order, which may have been

a source of the conflict itself. This interdisciplinary perspective frames recovery as transformation; however, the economic dimension in this concept remains somewhat peripheral.

According to [9], post-conflict recovery should be viewed as a distinct transitional phase that requires not only technical support but also the creation of a strategic coordination mechanism – the Strategic Recovery Facility. This mechanism, in their vision, would unite the efforts of international financial institutions, UN agencies, regional organizations, and local actors. Their approach is based on the recognition of the complexity of post-conflict economies and the need for flexibility and coordination among process participants.

This logic is to some extent echoed in the position of [10], who also emphasizes the complexity of recovery. Author of [10] analyzes modern post-conflict societies through the lens of historical precedents and points to the need for institutional adaptation and increased legitimacy of reforms. He devotes particular attention to the challenges of “donor dependency”, noting that external intervention without consideration of the local context may lead to the emergence of a “bubble economy”.

Similar ideas can be found authors of [11], who formulate a recovery concept based on four key pillars: security, justice, socio-economic well-being, and governance. In their view, the economy is only one element of a broader strategy that requires cross-sectoral integration. Another dimension of the issue is addressed by [12], who draws attention to the complexity of reintegration in contexts where state institutions remain weak. Author of [12] takes a critical view of the idea of a linear transition from humanitarian assistance to development and instead advocates for flexible, politically sensitive strategies.

A central position in the discussion on institutional legitimacy is held by the approach of Coyne. He argues that formal institutions remain unstable without an adequate informal foundation – trust, norms of interaction, and social capital. In his view, these factors ultimately determine whether the new political and economic order can become self-sustaining [13, 14]. This focus on internal mechanisms is complemented by the approach of Addison, who emphasizes the necessity of inclusive growth. He maintains that without the participation of the poorest segments of the population and without reforms in taxation, property and investment, post-conflict recovery will remain incomplete and unsustainable [15, 16].

A somewhat different emphasis is found in the work of [17, 18], who views the post-conflict period as a transitional “peace economy”. Author of [17, 18] questions the universality of neoliberal prescriptions and calls for national leadership, institutional adaptation, and the restoration of trust between donors and recipients. In a similar critical vein, Bhatia interprets post-conflict recovery as a contested arena of power and interests. His approach, grounded in institutional economics, highlights those aspects of intervention that give rise to new configurations of dependency [19].

Finally, author of [20] offers a deeply critical perspective on liberal recovery strategies, who argues that externally, imposed market mechanisms, when applied without consideration of the social context, often lead to growing inequality and provoke rejection. As an alternative, he envisions an emancipatory model based on justice, participation, and local legitimacy.

Within the domestic academic space, conceptual approaches to analyzing specific elements of post-conflict economic recovery in the Ukrainian context are gradually emerging. In [21], for instance, emphasize the importance of innovative management in the financial mechanisms of post-war development, exploring the adaptive strategies of agricultural enterprises. In turn, authors of [22] focus on the dynamics of foreign direct investment as a tool for sustainable economic transition amid protracted conflict and risk, underscoring the importance of regulatory and macroeconomic stability for attracting capital. [23, 24] highlight the importance of managing regional innovation potential as a basis for sustainable growth. Their findings, though not post-conflict-specific, are relevant for recovery settings facing institutional and financial constraints.

Also, modern research emphasizes that to ensure the recovery and socio-economic development of urbanized areas, it is necessary to implement long-term strategies that take into account innovation potential, demographic changes, financial sustainability and environmental challenges, in particular [25].

Overall, the analysis of approaches reflects growing attention to interdisciplinary understanding. However, despite this progress, a fundamental problem remains unresolved: existing studies tend to focus on isolated aspects of recovery or apply fragmented conceptual models that do not fully capture the interdependence of political, economic, institutional, and sociocultural dimensions. This gap in the literature highlights the need for a new conceptual approach that synthesizes existing insights and offers a coherent model for interpreting post-conflict economic recovery.

Given this context, the present article is deliberately positioned as a theoretical and conceptual study. Its primary objective is to construct an integrated interdisciplinary framework as a necessary foundation for future empirical and policy-oriented research. This strategy reflects the authors' recognition that a conceptually coherent analytical model must precede the development of applied tools in order to ensure both scientific rigor and practical relevance.

The aim of this research is, on the scientific level, to identify the limitations of existing approaches to post-conflict economic recovery, to explore the diversity of conceptual and disciplinary interpretations, and to develop an interdisciplinary analytical framework that explains recovery as a multidimensional and transformational process unfolding through the resolution of key systemic contradictions. The research explores the diversity of conceptual and disciplinary interpretations. Based on this, it develops an interdisciplinary analytical framework. This framework explains recovery as a multidimensional and transformational process. It unfolds through the resolution of key systemic contradictions. This includes the construction of a model that integrates economic, institutional, and conflict-related dimensions and clarifies their interrelation within the paradigm of international economic relations.

On the practical level, the proposed framework is expected to enhance the analytical capacity of policymakers, international organizations, and development actors by offering a more coherent and comprehensive basis for the design of recovery strategies. This, in turn, will make it possible to avoid the fragmentation of interventions, strengthen institutional legitimacy, and promote inclusive and sustainable peace-building through economic transformation.

2. Materials and Methods

The object of research is post-conflict economic recovery as a component of international economic relations, encompassing interactions among donors, recipients, international organizations, and foreign investors. The subject of this research is the conceptualization of post-conflict economic recovery as a subject of international economic relations. The research focuses on how this phenomenon is represented, analyzed, and interpreted within academic literature, policy documents, and interdisciplinary discourse. No empirical fieldwork or quantitative modeling was conducted; instead, the research is based on theoretical methods of analysis and conceptual synthesis.

A qualitative and analytical methodology was applied, drawing on a broad set of institutional documents (including those of the UN, World Bank, IMF) and peer-reviewed academic sources. The research employed the following methods:

- comparative analysis was used to examine and contrast institutional and disciplinary approaches to post-conflict recovery across different fields;
- content analysis was applied to identify key categories, definitions, and implicit assumptions within theoretical texts and policy frameworks;

- interdisciplinary synthesis served to integrate findings from political science, institutional economics, conflict studies, and transition theory into a unified analytical framework appropriate for international economic relations;

- critical review was used to reveal conceptual gaps, structural limitations, and normative biases in dominant recovery models;

- inductive generalization supported the formulation of a new working definition and model based on the comparative and critical assessment of existing approaches;

- all analytical procedures were carried out using standard qualitative methods, without the aid of specialized software. Theoretical consistency, conceptual coherence, and terminological clarity were prioritized throughout the research process.

3. Results and Discussion

International economic relations as an academic discipline have a distinctly interdisciplinary character, combining elements of economic theory (trade, investment, macro-finance), political science (analysis of the influence of international organizations, conditionality, soft power), and law (normative-institutional regulation of the global economy). In this sense, the interdisciplinary approach applied in this research is not only compatible with the logic of the field, but also corresponds to its current analytical level. As Robert Gilpin emphasized, global economic processes cannot be understood without simultaneously considering economic interests, political power, and institutional context [26]. In order to overcome disciplinary fragmentation and move toward a comprehensive understanding of post-conflict economic recovery, it is necessary to examine its key components from an interdisciplinary perspective.

In analyzing the category of post-conflictness, the three principal academic disciplines that examine different facets of post-conflict recovery – conflict studies, transition theory, and institutional economics – reject the simplified conception of post-conflictness as a clearly demarcated phase that begins immediately after the cessation of violence. Instead, it is understood as an extended transitional condition in which conflict evolves and continues to shape social processes.

In conflict studies, post-conflictness is viewed as a phase of latent or structural conflict, where violence persists in the form of discrimination, inequality, and mistrust [27–29]. This approach emphasizes the long-term redefinition of relationships and the importance of local participation in the recovery process [30].

Institutional economics interprets post-conflictness as a rupture in institutional continuity. Conflict is perceived as a disruption of trust, norms, and coordination mechanisms [31], while recovery is seen as the restoration of governance capacity through participation, accountability, and the engagement of local communities [32–34].

Transition theory frames post-conflictness as a condition of political uncertainty – not an endpoint, but the beginning of an unstable transformation in which neither democracy nor peace is guaranteed [35–37]. It highlights the simultaneous and often contradictory nature of transformations in political, legal, and administrative domains [38].

Approaches to recovery also differ significantly in their conceptual foundations. For conflict studies, recovery is primarily a process of deep transformation that involves not only institutions but also symbolic dimensions – such as memory, identity, and recognition [27, 28, 39]. The inclusion of local actors and sensitivity to the cultural context are essential components of this approach [40].

Institutional economics views recovery as a mechanism for rebuilding trust and restoring justice by adapting formal rules to informal practices, removing barriers to participation, and enhancing legitimacy [33, 41, 42].

Transition theory emphasizes the political nature of institutional transformation: recovery is not merely the implementation of standard reforms, but the creation of new models of interaction among the state, elites, and citizens [36, 38, 43].

Interdisciplinary analysis has made it possible to identify not only shared elements but also fundamental differences in how each of the three key categories – post-conflictness, economy, and recovery – is understood within the three academic approaches. For clarity, these similarities and differences are summarized in Table 1.

The conducted analysis has demonstrated that within the existing interdisciplinary approaches, the meanings of key categories – post-conflictness, economy, and recovery – remain insufficiently emphasized. As a result, efforts to integrate these concepts into a single framework without fully accounting for the entire spectrum of their content lead to conceptual inconsistencies and the oversimplification of complex phenomena. This, in turn, produces a distorted understanding of post-conflict recovery, limits the effectiveness of strategies, and prevents the identification and resolution of the deep contradictions that underlie the conflict.

First, the term “post-conflictness” itself contains an internal contradiction. Its literal meaning suggests the end of conflict, whereas in conflict studies it is emphasized that violence does not cease with the end of hostilities, but rather takes on new forms. The insufficient focus on this aspect impedes the resolution of the contradiction between visible order and the persistence of social chaos, which can become a latent source of conflict escalation. In institutional approaches, post-conflictness is interpreted as a period of restoring basic political and administrative mechanisms. However, perceiving the formal presence of state institutions as a sign of stabilization can lead to a mistaken assumption about the resilience of institutional order. This leaves unresolved the contradiction between the old institutional structure and the need for its renewal.

In contexts of transition from authoritarian or conflict-ridden regimes toward more inclusive forms of governance, temporary governance configurations often emerge. Although they may be formally recognized as stages of recovery, in practice they tend to lack legitimacy, provide limited public participation, and fail to establish stable mechanisms for reconciling competing interests. Here, another unresolved contradiction becomes evident – between external order and internal injustice, which remains invisible in institutional interpretations. Finally, insufficient attention is paid to the consequences of collective trauma and symbolic conflicts related to historical memory, unequal distribu-

tion of suffering, and moral uncertainty. Ignoring these issues during the recovery process undermines trust in reforms and intensifies social fragmentation, as the deep contradiction between demands for justice and the refusal to acknowledge past violence remains unaddressed.

Second, the insufficient emphasis on specific aspects of the category of “economy” within the current interdisciplinary framework also complicates the development of a comprehensive approach to recovery. In many approaches, the economy is primarily understood as a domain of production recovery, growth, and macroeconomic stabilization, while its social, political, and moral dimensions are left aside. As a result, the economy is perceived not as a potential source of conflict, but merely as an object of destruction requiring technical reconstruction. Such reductionism leads to the neglect of the fundamental contradiction between externally efficient market mechanisms and the internal sense of injustice that persists within society.

Recovery may thus be accompanied by the preservation of exclusionary structures, unequal access to resources, and inequitable distribution, which in turn risks generating new forms of social tension. The situation is especially precarious when new economic decisions are not perceived as legitimate, because they are not associated with hopes for justice and participation. This reproduces the contradiction between declared equality and the actual exclusion of a significant portion of the population from economic processes.

An additional problem lies in the uncritical reproduction of pre-war economic institutions, which may reintroduce the very practices that contributed to the outbreak of conflict. In the absence of institutional renewal, the contradiction persists between the need to revise the rules and the continued dominance of old arrangements that serve the interests of a narrow group of actors. In international recovery practice, a technocratic understanding of the economy as a domain of external regulation – through reforms, investments, and budgetary control – often prevails. However, when these measures are not accompanied by public participation, transparency, and sensitivity to context, they are perceived as externally imposed. This generates yet another fundamental contradiction – between external influence and the internal legitimacy of economic policy – undermining public trust in the overall recovery process.

Table 1

Interdisciplinary analysis of the categories of post-conflictness, economy, and recovery within three theoretical approaches (author’s comparative synthesis)

Category / approach	Conflict studies	Institutional economics	Transition theory
Post-conflictness	Seen as a prolonged and deeply rooted process in which conflict persists in latent or symbolic forms (through inequality, hostility, historical memory)	Emphasis on the breakdown of trust mechanisms, formal norms, and governance structures; post-conflictness as institutional instability	A condition of political uncertainty and instability following the collapse of the previous regime; the new order has yet to be established
Common view	All approaches agree that post-conflictness is a complex and unstable condition that does not end with the cessation of hostilities		
Approach limitations	Insufficient attention to institutional recovery and state governance	Limited sensitivity to identities, values, and cultural factors	Inadequate analysis of the impact of conflict on the social and normative foundations of power
Economy	The economy is seen as a driver or continuation of conflict: inequality, exclusion, and control over resources may trigger renewed violence	The economy is understood as a system of rules and agreements requiring the restoration of trust, legitimacy, and inclusive participation	Economic activity is shaped by politics, informal arrangements, and competition for control over resources
Common view	All approaches regard the economy as closely interlinked with political and social processes, rather than an autonomous sphere		
Approach limitations	Tendency toward moralization; insufficient attention to the functioning of economic institutions	Emphasis on stability may downplay the need for deeper transformation	Reliance on external prescriptions without adaptation to local context
Recovery	Recovery as a transformation of social relations, building trust, local participation, and overcoming trauma	The creation or renewal of effective institutions capable of ensuring fair distribution and trust	Recovery as a process of establishing legitimate order under conditions of political and institutional instability
Common view	All approaches consider recovery a multi-level and long-term process that goes beyond physical reconstruction		
Approach limitations	Possible underestimation of the role of institutional mechanisms and state policy	Tendency toward standardized solutions without regard for social dynamics	Failure to account for the specificities of individual societies; risk of importing non-functional models

Third, the final key element of the framework is the category of “recovery”, which encompasses institutional, economic, and social dimensions. The way in which recovery is defined determines whether it becomes a formal return to functionality or a transformational process capable of altering conflict-generating structures. In existing approaches, this category is frequently reduced to technical tasks: physical reconstruction, institutional stabilization, and the achievement of macroeconomic balance. Such a reductionist perspective ignores the fundamental contradiction between the desire for order and the persistent institutional instability that society experiences as uncertainty or chaos.

When recovery is limited to reinstating pre-war institutions without critically reflecting on their role in the conflict, it can reinforce prior inequalities, marginalize vulnerable groups, and generate new cycles of distrust. This deepens the contradiction between restoration and equitable redistribution – that is, between a return to the familiar and the need for genuine change. The situation is further complicated by the application of universal models (liberalization, privatization) that do not always fit the local context, thereby widening the gap between external expectations and internal experience. Ultimately, this gives rise to yet another fundamental contradiction – between centralized control over recovery and the societal demand for participation and justice.

In general, the analysis shows important consequences of underemphasized conceptual meanings in the current interdisciplinary framework. Narrow interpretations of the categories of post-conflictness, economy, and recovery limit the understanding of these phenomena. As a result, it becomes difficult to identify and resolve multiple contradictions. Many of these contradictions lie at the root of conflict or may contribute to its recurrence. A summary of these interconnections is presented in Table 2.

To ensure the relevance of an updated interdisciplinary framework for post-conflict economic recovery, it is necessary to expand the interpretation of its core categories. Post-conflictness should be understood as a multilayered and conflict-prone condition in which fundamental contradictions persist despite outward stabilization. The nature and intensity of these contradictions largely depend on the type of conflict from which the recovery process emerges. As noted by prominent conflict theorist Galtung [28], conflicts may take different forms – including direct, structural, and cultural violence – and may vary in scale and symmetry. These may include internal civil wars, protracted structural oppression, symmetrical armed confrontations, or large-scale unilateral

military aggressions. Each of these generates distinct post-conflict conditions and calls for differentiated recovery strategies. While this study does not aim to develop a full typology of conflicts, the proposed framework is designed to be sufficiently adaptable to account for such variation in future applied research.

The economy should be viewed not merely as a sphere of production, but as a space of distribution, access, and participation that requires critical reconsideration of the role of pre-war institutions and strategies from the perspective of justice and legitimacy. Recovery, in turn, should be conceived as a process of deep transformation – not a return to the previous state, but the creation of new, just, and sustainable forms of economic order. All of these additions aim to ensure that the framework is capable of encompassing both context-specific and fundamental contradictions underlying the conflict. Ignoring these tensions limits the effectiveness of recovery and creates the risk of renewed escalation. Only through the integration of these dimensions can the updated framework fulfill not only a technical, but also a reconciliatory and integrative function – fostering sustainable peace, economic integration, and the mitigation of social risks over the long term.

On the basis of the expanded interdisciplinary framework for interpreting post-conflict economic recovery, it is proposed propose an original vision of this process as unfolding within a multidimensional space. The idea of recovery as multidimensional has already been expressed in the aforementioned studies by other authors, but in those works, multidimensionality typically refers to the combination of sectoral dimensions – economic, social, political, etc. In contrast, it is proposed propose a deeper, more volumetric understanding of the multidimensional space of post-conflict economic recovery, in which the dimensions are defined by fundamental conflict-generating contradictions. Our analysis has revealed a wide range of such contradictions. However, it is possible to argue that they can be grouped into three core tensions. These are: order versus chaos (governability versus instability); old versus new (reproduction of pre-war structures versus the need for renewal); and justice versus injustice (equitable access and recognition versus exclusion and unaddressed grievances).

With regard to the contradiction between external and internal, it is not considered to be fully autonomous. Rather, it is often derivative of, or intersects with, the three fundamental dimensions outlined above. The opposition between external interventions and internal legitimacy appears in several key dimensions.

Table 2

Interrelation between the consequences of a limited interdisciplinary framework for the core categories of post-conflict economic recovery and its unresolved partial and fundamental contradictions (author’s comparative synthesis)

Consequences and risks of a narrow interpretation	Context-specific contradiction	Fundamental contradiction
Framing the end of conflict solely in terms of reduced violence, without accounting for its latent and structural forms	Between perceived stability and the actual persistence of social instability and tension	Order – chaos
Emphasis on physical reconstruction and technical indicators without addressing the root causes of conflict	Between a technical approach to recovery and its transformative essence	
Assessing stability solely based on the presence of formal institutions without considering trust, effectiveness, and informal norms	Between formal state restoration and actual institutional fragility	Old – new
Reproducing pre-war economic structures without revisiting mechanisms of resource distribution and influence	Between institutional restoration and the need for fair and inclusive renewal	
Mechanistic reinstatement of pre-war institutions without considering social change	Between the pursuit of stability and the necessity of systemic transformation	Justice – injustice
Oversimplified perception of transitional governance as an indicator of political normalization	Between external political stabilization and internal perceptions of injustice	
Neglect of collective trauma, historical memory, and moral ambiguity	Between the public demand for acknowledgement of the past and the institutional tendency to suppress it	External – internal
Understanding the economy solely as a technical domain of growth, investment, and market restoration without its social dimension	Between the efficiency of economic mechanisms and the social experience of exclusion	
Normalization of externally imposed economic reforms without consideration of local context	Between external pressure and the internal legitimacy of economic policy	

It is reflected in the old–new tension, for example, when external models are imposed instead of allowing local forms to evolve. It also manifests in the justice dimension, where external actors may be viewed as unrepresentative or unjust. Finally, it appears in the order dimension, as excessive external coordination can undermine endogenous governability. Thus, this contradiction should be regarded as a context-specific manifestation or complex combination of the foundational tensions.

It is important to note that these dimensions – or axes – are directly connected to the major fields of scholarly analysis: transition theory relates to the shift from old to new; institutional economics to resilience and governability; and conflict studies to justice and inclusion. Within this model, the process of post-conflict economic recovery may be conceptualized as movement through a space structured by these three core contradictions (Fig. 1). The closer a society and its economy move toward justice, renewal, and resilience (to the extent that resilience and novelty serve justice), the further it progresses from conflict. This is the essence of recovery – not the return to a previous state, but advancement toward new, more sustainable and just forms of social and economic life.

Accordingly, the proposed framework makes it possible to interpret economic recovery not as a purely technical process of GDP growth or investment attraction, but as a complex set of coordinated efforts aimed at resolving key systemic tensions. These include tensions between macroeconomic stabilization and redistribution, external intervention and internal legitimacy, institutional continuity and transformation. Recovery strategies, therefore, must address such issues as poverty reduction, reform of property rights, tax justice, labor inclusion, and participatory governance – always in light of the specific legacy and distortions of the conflict. While the current study focuses on the development of a general interdisciplinary model, future applied research will be needed to operationalize these directions based on specific national cases.

Recovery in this context encompasses institutional, normative, and value-based transformations that extend beyond the sphere of production and distribution to include mechanisms of participation, recognition, accountability, and trust. It unfolds under conditions of high uncertainty and requires simultaneous movement along several axes: from injustice to justice, from outdated and ineffective forms to new ones, and from chaos to coordinated order. Post-conflict economic recovery, therefore, is not merely about rebuilding what has been destroyed, but about creating an economic order that is perceived as legitimate, just, and sustainable in the eyes of the majority.

Based on the extended definition above, a concise formulation can also be proposed. Post-conflict economic recovery is the process of transforming economic relations, institutions, and rules. Through this process, society and the economy move from a state inherited from conflict toward a more resilient, just, and inclusive order. This transition occurs by consciously addressing the root contradictions of the conflict. At the same time, it involves restoring lost potential and implementing institutional, normative, and value-based changes. These changes aim to foster trust between the state and economic actors, promote broad citizen participation, and ensure long-term sustainability.

Our research confirms several key propositions articulated in previous works regarding the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing post-conflict economic recovery. In particular, it is possible to agree with [8, 9], who emphasized that successful recovery is impossible without considering social, institutional, and political factors alongside economic ones. At the same time, unlike these authors – who largely combined multiple approaches intuitively – it is possible to apply a more structured method. A deliberate interdisciplinary analysis of each component of the concept of “post-conflict economic recovery” concept was conducted. Specifically, post-conflictness, the economy, and recovery through the lens of three theoretical traditions were examined: conflict studies, institutional economics, and transition theory.

This approach has allowed not only to clarify which important aspects are neglected in existing models, but also to demonstrate the risks to which such omissions may lead. Our conclusions partially resonate with the critique of the “liberal” vision of recovery found in the works [13, 17, 20]; however, our emphasis lies not on isolated policy shortcomings, but on the systemic failure to address the deep-rooted contradictions underlying conflicts. The proposed interdisciplinary framework – based on the idea of multidimensional recovery as movement within a space defined by three fundamental tensions: order / chaos, old / new, and justice / injustice – enables to view recovery not as a technical task, but as a process of profound transformation. This perspective opens new possibilities for the development of adaptive strategies that are sensitive to local contexts and genuinely capable of reducing the risks of conflict recurrence.

The key difference between our approach and previous literature lies in the structured integration of disciplinary perspectives into a coherent analytical model. While many earlier works point to the importance of complexity, they often lack a unifying conceptual structure. Our model not only identifies neglected factors but also demonstrates their interdependence and systemic role within the recovery process. This allows for a deeper interpretation of why conventional approaches frequently fail to achieve sustainable outcomes. From a practical standpoint, the proposed framework can be applied in several domains.

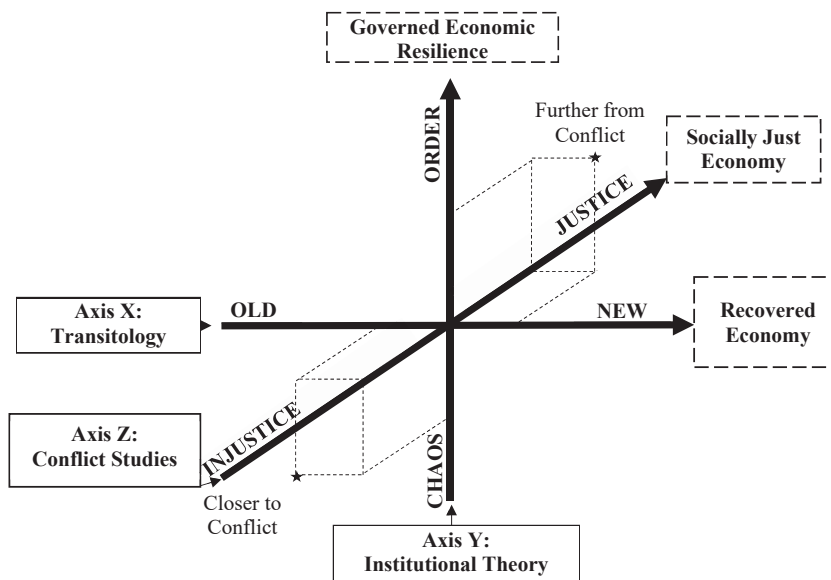


Fig. 1. Interdisciplinary model of post-conflict recovery of countries within the paradigm of international economic relations (compiled by the authors)

Such an understanding of the substance of post-conflict economic recovery allows to proceed to the formulation of its comprehensive, extended definition. Post-conflict economic recovery is the process through which an economy and society transition from a state inherited from conflict to a state capable of ensuring resilience, justice, and inclusion. This process does not entail a return to previous modes of functioning, but rather a restructuring of economic relations, institutions, and rules based on a conscious resolution of the contradictions that underpinned the conflict and continue to hinder sustainable peace.

First, it offers analytical guidance for international donors and development agencies in designing recovery strategies that are better aligned with the structural and institutional realities of post-conflict societies. Second, it can be used in academic and policy training programs to foster more nuanced understanding of recovery processes. Third, it serves as a tool for national governments to evaluate the transformative potential of economic interventions and to anticipate possible social or political side effects. In all cases, the model promotes a shift from short-term stabilization to long-term institutional and participatory transformation.

At the same time, certain limitations arise from the conceptual nature of this research. The framework has not yet been applied to specific country cases, and its reliance on secondary sources limits the scope for empirical testing. However, these features are consistent with the exploratory goals of the research and define directions for future applied studies.

The conditions of martial law in Ukraine had limited impact on the implementation of this research, given its primarily theoretical and conceptual nature. Despite the ongoing war, access to academic databases and international publications remained stable, and digital communication infrastructure functioned reliably. At the same time, the war significantly increased the practical relevance of the research, as it brought the challenges of post-conflict recovery into the focus of national and international discourse, highlighting the need for coherent and adaptive recovery models.

Prospects for further research include empirical validation of the proposed framework in different national contexts, particularly in Ukraine during and after the war. It would also be beneficial to explore sector-specific applications of the model – such as infrastructure, education, or justice systems – to assess how the interplay of institutional, economic, and social dimensions operates at the micro level. Finally, future research could examine how international actors interpret and apply recovery principles, and whether these practices align with the transformational logic proposed in research.

4. Conclusions

The interdisciplinary analysis of academic and conceptual approaches to post-conflict economic recovery focused on three key perspectives: conflict studies, institutional theory, and transition theory. This analysis revealed significant divergences in the understanding of core elements of recovery. It also helped to identify important dimensions that remain outside the scope of existing analytical frameworks.

The identified limitations and fragmentation of narrowly disciplinary approaches result in the reduction of the complex nature of post-conflict conditions. This leads to conceptual distortions, the neglect of fundamental contradictions, and, consequently, the ineffectiveness of recovery strategies in practice. Attempts to interpret recovery merely as stabilization or reconstruction, without addressing the nature of conflict and its socio-economic and normative dimensions, limit both the analytical completeness and the practical applicability of such strategies, creating risks of reform delegitimization and conflict recurrence. The analytical framework proposed in this article helps to overcome these limitations by providing a holistic view of the causal structure of post-conflict dynamics and by incorporating key interdisciplinary dimensions.

A systematic comparison of the economic, institutional, and conflict-related dimensions of post-conflict recovery has demonstrated their interdependence and enabled their integration into a new interdisciplinary framework developed within the paradigm of international economic relations. Within the proposed construct, these dimensions are no longer treated in isolation but are interlinked through the coordinates of fundamental contradictions. This makes it possible to reflect the real sources of tension and obstacles to recovery.

The updated interdisciplinary framework, which captures the underlying essence of post-conflict economic recovery and explains its dynamics as the progressive resolution of three fundamental contradictions – order / chaos, old / new, and justice / injustice – serves as the foundation for the author's multidimensional model. In this model, recovery is not viewed as a linear process of reconstruction, but rather as navigation through a complex space of conflicting coordinates, within which institutional, economic, and transitional transformations unfold.

Based on the recovery framework constructed in the logic of international economic relations, both an extended and a concise original definition of post-conflict economic recovery have been proposed. In this definition, recovery is seen as a transition from a condition inherited from conflict to a new economic order. This order is expected to be just, resilient, and inclusive. The transition is achieved by recognizing and addressing deep-rooted contradictions. It also involves restoring lost potential through the transformation of institutions, rules, and practices.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest in relation to this research, whether financial, personal, authorship or otherwise, that could affect the research and its results presented in this paper.

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✉ **Vitalii Hramotniev**, PhD, Associate Professor, Deputy Director, Institute for Strategic Studies "New Ukraine", Kyiv, Ukraine, e-mail: gramotnevitaliy@gmail.com, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-2511-4649>

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Andrii Buriachenko, Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Department of Finance named after Viktor Fedosov, Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman, Kyiv, Ukraine, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7354-7491>

.....
Tetiana Obolenska, Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Department of International Trade and Marketing, Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman, Kyiv, Ukraine, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8448-3622>

.....
Pavlo Logvinov, PhD, Department of Finance named after Viktor Fedosov, Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman, Kyiv, Ukraine, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9855-0315>

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 ✉ Corresponding author