

THE ISSUE OF SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AS A CRUCIAL COMPONENT OF STATE R & D POLICY: CRIMEAN CASE STUDY

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Abstract.

Introduction. This study examines the challenges and strategies involved in identifying and analyzing scientific publications from the occupied territories of Crimea, focusing on publishers, journals, and institutions operating within the region. The ongoing geopolitical situation, restrictions on accessing resources, and limited visibility of local journals in international databases complicate the process of gathering data about scientific activities in these areas. **Method.** The research employed a two-pronged approach combining a manual search process with the use of scientific databases. The authors conducted a thorough manual search to identify publishers and institutions associated with journals in the affected regions. Additionally, they utilized scientific databases to retrieve relevant metadata such as ISSN numbers to support the identification of relevant journals. **Analysis.** The analysis focused on overcoming barriers such as restricted access to Russian websites, limited indexing of journals in international databases, and the fragmented nature of available data. Creative strategies, including leveraging local networks and institutional contacts, were used to fill gaps in information. **Results.** The results indicated that while the manual search and database queries successfully identified several publications, access to comprehensive and up-to-date data remained a significant challenge. Despite these obstacles, the combined methods proved effective in pinpointing relevant publications and institutions in the occupied territories. **Conclusions.** The study underscores the complexities of mapping scientific activities in occupied regions, highlighting the importance of adaptive search strategies and the need for multifaceted approaches to overcome barriers to information. Further research and international cooperation are necessary to gain a more complete understanding of the scientific landscape in these areas and to support the preservation of academic integrity in conflict zones.

Keywords: Scientific journals, ISSN registration, bibliometric analysis, occupied territories, international law, scientometric systems.

INTRODUCTION

Since the occupation of Crimea and parts of Donbas in 2014, Ukraine has faced not only substantial material and institutional losses in the field of science, but also profound challenges to its academic sovereignty. The displacement of research institutions, the loss of infrastructure, and the fragmentation of scientific communities have significantly undermined the country's capacity to maintain a coherent and nationally governed research and development system. While these disruptions have been widely documented in terms of their impact on research capacity, less attention has been paid to their implications for the governance and legitimacy of scientific knowledge production.

In this context, academic sovereignty emerges as a critical analytical and policy concept. It refers to the ability of a state to define, regulate, and recognize scientific activity within its own legal and institutional framework, including the attribution of affiliations, the validation of research outputs, and their integration into national and international scientometric systems. The occupation of territories disrupts these processes by creating conditions in which scientific institutions, publishers, and journals may operate outside the jurisdiction of the state, becoming embedded instead in alternative regulatory environments.

The case of Crimea is particularly illustrative. Following its occupation, a significant number of research institutions and academic infrastructures were either relocated, dissolved, or reconstituted under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. This transformation has been accompanied by a parallel reorganization of the local publishing landscape. Journals have been re-registered, editorial policies altered, and institutional affiliations reassigned, often without clear continuity or transparency. As a result, scientific publications originating from Crimea occupy an ambiguous position: formally linked to institutions located in occupied territory, yet frequently integrated into external bibliometric and indexing systems under modified identities.

These developments pose a number of challenges for Ukraine's state policy in the field of research and development. The lack of reliable access to information about publishing activities in occupied territories complicates the monitoring and evaluation of scientific output. It also raises questions about the legitimacy of such publications, the proper attribution of authorship and institutional affiliation, and the risks of their implicit recognition within international scientific databases. In turn, this affects the integrity of national research assessment systems and undermines efforts to ensure compliance with international standards of research ethics and academic integrity.

Against this background, this study focuses on the problem of identifying and analyzing scientific publications originating from the occupied territory of Crimea. By examining publishers, journals, and affiliated institutions, the research aims to contribute to a more systematic understanding of how scientific communication is reshaped under conditions of occupation and how these transformations intersect with issues of academic sovereignty and state R&D policy.

THIS STUDY'S FOCUS

The loss of scientific institutions and research infrastructure in Crimea has had wide-ranging consequences for Ukraine's scientific and educational landscape. Rather than attempting to cover all these dimensions, this study concentrates on a more specific issue: the publishing activities of scientific institutions that continue to operate in the temporarily occupied territory.

The empirical scope of the research is limited to the Crimean Peninsula. This limitation is primarily methodological, as the identification and verification of relevant journals rely on manual procedures. At the same time, Crimea represents a particularly important case due to the historical continuity of its research institutions and their role within Ukraine's academic system prior to the occupation.

Accordingly, the study focuses on scientific journals associated with institutions based in Crimea, examining their current status and publishing practices.

The issue of academic publishing in occupied or unrecognized territories deserves closer attention because it directly affects the reliability of scholarly communication and the broader norms that underpin academic work. In contexts where internationally recognized governance is absent, publishing practices may develop in ways that do not fully align with established standards, which raises concerns about transparency and accountability.

One of the key challenges is the unauthorized continuation, replication, or rebranding of academic journals. When such journals operate outside commonly accepted publishing frameworks, it becomes difficult for researchers to assess the credibility of the material they produce. This

uncertainty can, in turn, weaken trust not only in individual journals but also in the wider system of scholarly communication.

Another concern relates to the circulation of questionable or contested content presented as academic research. Without effective quality control, such publications may contribute to the spread of misleading interpretations or unverified claims. Over time, this can affect academic discourse, influence policy debates, and complicate international research cooperation.

In addition, the lack of clear guidance for how international publishers, repositories, and indexing databases should engage with entities in occupied territories creates a grey area. In practice, this may lead to inconsistent decisions and, in some cases, unintended recognition of actors operating outside internationally accepted legal frameworks.

Addressing these issues requires a combination of analytical and practical efforts. Developing clearer monitoring approaches, refining existing policies, and formulating applicable recommendations would help reduce uncertainty and support more consistent decision-making. Such steps are also important for protecting intellectual property, encouraging responsible data practices, and limiting the misuse of academic platforms.

AIM

The aim of this research is to identify and analyse scientific journals and publishers operating in the temporarily occupied territories that demonstrate practices inconsistent with the principles of academic integrity and, where applicable, with international legal norms. The study examines issues such as non-transparent editorial processes, questionable publishing practices, and the use of scholarly outputs in ways that may disadvantage original authors or institutions.

Particular attention is given to the extent to which these journals and publishers align with widely accepted international standards of academic publishing. This includes considerations related to editorial oversight, peer review procedures, authorship practices, and the handling of intellectual property.

The research also explores situations in which publishing activities may intersect with broader legal and ethical concerns, including respect for intellectual property rights, the status of institutions operating under occupation, and the preservation of academic freedom. Rather than making generalised claims, the study seeks to document specific patterns and cases that illustrate these challenges.

By systematising this evidence, the research aims to contribute to ongoing discussions on responsible academic publishing in complex political contexts. More broadly, it seeks to support efforts to strengthen transparency, reinforce adherence to international standards, and maintain trust in scholarly communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014 has had profound implications for scientific research and academic publishing in the region. This literature review examines the impact of occupation on scientific institutions, the appropriation of academic outputs, and the broader challenges to academic integrity and international law.

The annexation led to the disruption of key Ukrainian research institutions located in Crimea, such as the Institute of Biology of the Southern Seas (IBSS) and the Marine Hydrophysical Institute (MHI). These institutions were integral to marine biology, geology, and climatology studies. The occupation resulted in the loss of unique scientific equipment, data repositories, and the displacement of researchers. Consequently, Ukraine's capacity to monitor and study the Black Sea's marine environment was significantly diminished. The Ukrainian Scientific Center of Ecology of the Sea (UkrSCES) in Odesa has attempted to fill this gap but faces challenges due to restricted access to the Black Sea and limited resources.

Occupying authorities have systematically appropriated academic outputs from Crimean institutions. Journals previously registered under Ukrainian ISSN numbers have been re-registered under the Russian system, effectively obscuring their Ukrainian origins. For instance, the «Crimean Journal of Internal Diseases» is now published under Russian auspices. This re-registration undermines Ukraine's sovereignty and complicates the tracking of academic publications from occupied territories. A study analyzing affiliations in the INSPIRE-HEP database found over 70 instances where institutions from occupied Ukrainian territories were listed as part of the Russian Federation, highlighting the extent of this issue (Berger-Hrynova, 2024).

The rebranding and re-registration of academic journals from occupied territories pose significant challenges to academic integrity and international law. These practices can lead to misinformation, as research from these journals may be disseminated under false pretenses. A report by Chemical & Engineering News highlighted concerns about the increasing number of papers citing universities in occupied Ukrainian territories as Russian institutions, raising questions about the legitimacy and oversight of such publications (Chawla, D. S. 2024)

The international academic community faces difficulties in addressing these challenges due to the complexities of verifying journal origins and affiliations. The ISSN International Centre provides guidelines for requesting ISSNs and emphasizes the importance of accurate information in the registration process.

However, the re-registration of journals from occupied territories complicates bibliometric analyses and the enforcement of sanctions, as these publications may be inadvertently included in international databases.

Additionally to the previously discussed aspects, it is important to pay attention to specific scientific studies and articles that analyze the impact of the occupation on scientific activity and publications in Crimea and other temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

A article *Simulation of Scientific Staff Training in Temporarily Occupied Territories of Donetsk and Luhansk Regions* examines trends in the training of scientific personnel in the temporarily occupied territories. The authors note that there is a lack of objective information about the actual state of education and science in these areas, which complicates decision-making, highlighting the need for further research in this area (Shopina, 2022).

These studies provide a deeper understanding of the impact of occupation on scientific activities and publications in Ukraine, emphasizing the need for further research and international cooperation to preserve academic integrity and support Ukrainian science.

Russia's military aggression against Ukraine has had a profound effect on scientific collaborations and research output in the country. A detailed bibliometric analysis by Ostapenko et al. (2023) examined the impact of this conflict on scientific literature, reviewing publications from 2014 to 2023. The study employed tools like the Bibliometrix R package and InfraNodus to analyze publication trends, subject areas, and international collaboration patterns. The findings revealed a significant shift in research focus after February 24, 2022, with increased attention on framing the conflict as a full-scale war and exploring its broader global impacts, such as on energy and food security. The analysis also identified gaps in the existing literature, suggesting areas for further study to better understand the war's consequences and to support Ukraine's post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

In a previous study, Nazarovets (2017) explored the dynamics of Ukrainian-Russian scientific cooperation during the early years of the conflict (2014–2016). By analyzing data from the Scopus database, the research uncovered a sharp decline in joint publications between Ukrainian and Russian institutions, especially after 2014. While collaborations in major international projects continued, the study highlighted the detrimental effects of military conflict on bilateral scientific cooperation. These findings are essential for shaping science development policies in Ukraine, emphasizing the need to adjust collaborative approaches in light of geopolitical tensions.

The global scientific community has also reacted to the invasion. An article in *Nature* shed light on the experiences of Ukrainian researchers who have persisted in their work despite the ongoing conflict. For example, neuroscientist Sergiy Sylantyev volunteered to defend Ukraine shortly after the invasion in February 2022, exemplifying the resilience and determination of Ukrainian scientists in times of crisis.

Additionally, discussions about science diplomacy have surfaced, focusing on the role of international collaboration in tackling global challenges during times of geopolitical strife. A commentary in *Frontiers Policy Labs* stressed the importance of fostering cooperation between Russian and Ukrainian scientists, despite the ongoing war. The article called for strategic measures to rebuild Ukraine's scientific infrastructure and integrate it into the European Research Area, advocating for scientific collaboration as a potential bridge between warring nations.

In addition to peer-reviewed academic sources, this study draws on selected journalistic and analytical materials (e.g., *Krym.Realii*, *Suspilne*, *Argumentua*) as supplementary factual evidence. These sources are used specifically to document individual cases of institutional transformation, changes in journal registration practices, and the use of identifiers (ISSN) in temporarily occupied territories (*Argumentua*, 2024; *Krym.Realii*, 2024; *Suspilne*, 2024). While these materials do not constitute academic research in the strict sense, they provide valuable empirical insights into ongoing processes that are not yet fully captured in scholarly literature. Accordingly, a clear distinction is maintained between peer-reviewed studies and journalistic sources throughout the analysis.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in several stages. The initial phase focused on mapping scientific institutions located in the temporarily occupied territory of the Crimean Peninsula in order to identify those potentially involved in publishing activities. This step provided a baseline for further investigation of journals and publishing entities that continue to operate under the current conditions.

Given the limited visibility of many of these journals, a manual identification approach was adopted as a core method. Searches were conducted using the names of institutions, publishers, and affiliated organizations, primarily through open online sources. This approach proved necessary because a considerable number of journals from the region are not indexed in major international databases or are only partially represented there. As a result, conventional bibliometric tools alone were insufficient for comprehensive identification.

To ensure greater methodological transparency, additional criteria for the inclusion and assessment of journals were applied. The study focused on journals that demonstrated at least minimal evidence of publishing activity after 2014 and could be linked directly or indirectly to institutions located in the occupied territory of Crimea. Inclusion required the presence of verifiable identifiers (such as ISSN), traceable publisher or institutional affiliation, and at least partial accessibility of publication records (e.g., via websites, archives, or database entries). Journals lacking any verifiable metadata or those for which no evidence of continued activity after 2014 could be established were excluded from the core sample, although they were noted separately where relevant.

The temporal scope of the analysis covered the period from 2014 to 2024, allowing for the observation of structural changes in publishing practices following the occupation, including re-registration, renaming, and shifts in institutional affiliation. Particular attention was paid to discontinuities in journal histories and inconsistencies in metadata, which may indicate attempts to reframe or obscure institutional identity.

As a result of the combined search and verification procedures, a total of 27 journals were identified as potentially operating within or in connection with the occupied territory. Of these, 9 journals demonstrated characteristics that may be interpreted as problematic or ambiguous from the perspective of research integrity and academic affiliation. These characteristics included, *inter alia*,

unclear publisher provenance, inconsistencies in ISSN usage, discrepancies between declared and actual institutional affiliations, and irregularities in editorial transparency.

While these figures should be interpreted with caution given the limitations outlined above, they provide an empirical basis for identifying broader patterns in the transformation of the regional publishing landscape. Importantly, the use of clearly defined inclusion criteria and a specified temporal framework enhances the reproducibility of the approach and allows for its *дальнейше* refinement in subsequent studies.

The data collection process was further complicated by restricted access to a number of online resources, including websites hosted in the Russian domain. These limitations affected the availability of primary information and required the use of alternative strategies. In practice, this involved consulting archived web content, cross-referencing multiple sources, and drawing on professional networks within the academic community to verify the existence and status of specific journals. Where possible, institutional affiliations and publication histories were checked against independent sources to improve reliability.

In parallel, selected international and regional scientific databases were used to supplement the manual search. Although coverage of journals from the occupied territories was limited and sometimes outdated, these databases provided useful metadata, including ISSN identifiers, publisher information, and partial indexing records. This information made it possible to confirm journal identities and, in some cases, trace changes in titles, publishers, or institutional affiliations over time.

To improve consistency, the collected data were systematised according to a set of basic criteria, including journal title, publisher, institutional affiliation, availability of website, indexing status, and evidence of publishing activity after 2014. When discrepancies were identified, priority was given to information confirmed by multiple independent sources.

The combination of manual search, database analysis, and cross-verification allowed for a more reliable identification of journals operating in the region. At the same time, the fragmented nature of available data, together with ongoing access restrictions, means that the resulting dataset should be interpreted as indicative rather than exhaustive.

Despite these constraints, the applied approach makes it possible to reconstruct key elements of the publishing landscape in the occupied territory and to identify patterns that would be difficult to capture through a single method. This mixed methodology also provides a basis for further refinement, including the potential use of automated monitoring tools and expanded collaboration with international indexing services in future research.

DISCUSSIONS AND RESULTS

In the first stage of the research, a comprehensive analysis was conducted to identify all academic and research institutions, as well as higher education establishments, that were lost or significantly affected as a result of the occupation. This stage involved systematically reviewing available records, registries, and databases to compile a detailed list of institutions that had ceased operations, relocated, or experienced disruptions in their activities. The analysis focused not only on universities and research centers but also on smaller institutions, such as specialized academies, scientific societies, and think tanks, to ensure that the full extent of the impact was documented.

Special attention was given to assessing the geographical distribution of these institutions, their previous contributions to academic and scientific advancement, and the specific areas of research they represented. By mapping out the affected institutions, the study provided a clear picture of the extent of the academic losses and disruptions caused by the occupation, laying the groundwork for further investigation into their publications and research outputs. This initial step was crucial for establishing the context and scope of the study, as it allowed researchers to understand the broader implications of the occupation on the academic and research landscape.

So, the annexation of Crimea resulted in the disruption of numerous scientific and educational institutions. This loss extends beyond marine research, affecting a wide array of disciplines and facilities. Among the most significant are:

1. Marine Research and Conservation:

- Two dolphinariums (Sevastopol Dolphinarium and Karadag Dolphinarium).
- Marine reserves, such as Swan Islands in the Karkinit Bay and others critical for bird migration.
- The training sailing ship *Khersones*, associated with the Kerch Marine Institute, was seized.

2. Scientific Research on Land:

- **Natural Reserves and Botanical Gardens:** Karadag Nature Reserve, Nikitsky Botanical Garden (the oldest in Ukraine), and mountain-forest reserves in Yalta and Alushta.
- **Archival and Museum Collections:**
 - Simferopol and Sevastopol archives.
 - Central Museum of Tavrida and its Golden Treasury, Kerch Museum of Local History and its Golden Treasury.
 - Art museums: Aivazovsky Gallery in Feodosia, Simferopol Art Museum, and the Sevastopol Art Museum named after M. Kroshitsky.
 - Cultural landmarks: Bakhchisarai Khan's Palace Museum, Chersonesus Museum, and iconic literary museums such as those of A. P. Chekhov and Lesya Ukrainka in Yalta, Pushkin in Gurzuf, A. Grin in Feodosia and Old Crimea, M. Voloshin in Koktebel, and I. Selvinsky in Simferopol.
- **Scientific Facilities:**
 - Astrophysical observatories in Nauchnyi, Simeiz, and Blyukhera Bay.
 - Space research centers in Yevpatoria and Shkilne.
- **Libraries:** Republican Library named after Ivan Franko in Simferopol and its valuable collection of books.

3. Higher Education Institutions:

- The loss of universities and colleges has disrupted the educational process, scientific research, and international collaborations. These institutions include:
 - Tavriya National University named after V. I. Vernadskyi.
 - Crimea State Medical University.
 - Crimea Agrarian University.
 - Crimean Academy of Environmental and Resort Construction.
 - Yalta Institute of Humanities.
 - Kerch Maritime University.
 - Crimean Engineering and Pedagogical University (established by Crimean Tatar scholars led by Hero of Ukraine Fevzi Yakubov).
 - Sevastopol National Technical University.
 - Sevastopol National Nuclear University.

Prior to the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, Ukraine was home to five scientific research institutions that conducted applied and fundamental marine studies. These included the Ukrainian Scientific Center of Ecology of the Sea (UkrSCES) in Odesa, the Southern Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography (YugNIRO) in Kerch, the Institute of Biology of the Southern Seas (IBSS), the Marine Hydrophysical Institute (MHI), and the Marine Department of the Ukrainian Hydrometeorological Institute in Sevastopol. YugNIRO also operated smaller branches in Odesa and Berdiansk. Notably, the only research vessel capable of conducting maritime expeditions was based in Sevastopol and was illegally seized by Russia during the occupation of Crimea.

Currently, due to the ongoing war, Ukraine's scientific fleet remains inactive. The responsibilities tied to international agreements on marine environmental monitoring, fisheries, and other maritime activities now fall to the few scientific institutions that have been preserved.

The UkrSCES, under the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine, is the cornerstone of Ukraine's marine ecological monitoring system. As the leading state research institution in this field and a Regional Activity Center for the implementation of the Bucharest Convention, UkrSCES plays a critical role in assessing the Black Sea's marine environment in line with EU standards. However, military actions have rendered expeditionary missions in the Black Sea impossible, creating a significant gap in data collection and environmental monitoring.

Another pressing issue is the absence of an ichthyological component in the national marine ecological monitoring system, despite EU directives requiring the assessment of fish population parameters as a mandatory part of evaluating the marine environment's overall ecological status.

The annexation of Crimea disrupted the operations of key institutions like YugNIRO. The Odesa Center of YugNIRO is currently barely functional, with no resources for maritime data collection or research. Lacking its own facilities, it operates from rented premises under severe financial constraints. Meanwhile, the former Azov Branch of YugNIRO, reorganized in 2014 as the Institute of Fisheries and Marine Ecology (IFME), is located in occupied territory.

Marine geological research has also been severely impacted. At the time of the annexation, Ukraine lacked specialized marine geological research institutions, relying instead on the Marine Geological and Geophysical Expedition of the Black Sea Geological Prospecting State Enterprise (Prychornomor DRGP). The fleet of Prychornomor DRGP has deteriorated significantly, with no ships meeting seaworthiness standards or having functional crews.

The National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (NASU) also conducted significant marine research before the annexation. However, most of its infrastructure and personnel in Crimea remained under occupation. Only the former Odesa Branch of the Institute of Biology of the Southern Seas, now the Institute of Marine Biology, continues to function as a relatively independent research institution on mainland Ukraine.

The full-scale invasion in 2022 has exacerbated these challenges. Hostilities and the occupation of coastal regions have hindered scientific vessels' ability to operate, disrupting marine research, fisheries monitoring, and geological exploration. Infrastructure damage, including the destruction of monitoring equipment and vessels, has further crippled research capabilities. For instance, research vessels seized during Crimea's occupation are irretrievably lost.

Additionally, the reduction in state funding due to wartime expenses has placed critical financial pressure on scientific institutions, limiting their ability to function effectively. The lack of resources, combined with the inability to ensure researchers' safety during fieldwork, has significantly impaired Ukraine's capacity to meet international research and monitoring standards.

These institutions possessed a robust scientific potential, research, and educational infrastructure, as well as research fleets capable of conducting studies and monitoring the state of the marine environment. They accumulated, processed, and analyzed hydrological, geological, and other types of data. These organizations represented Ukraine in international scientific programs, including those of the European Union (EU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), specifically for Black Sea oceanographic research.

Notably, these institutions housed unique databases, particularly at YUGNIRO, the Marine Hydrophysical Institute, and the Odessa Branch of the Ukrainian Research Hydrometeorological Institute. These data repositories had no equivalents elsewhere, but the majority of these invaluable resources were left in Crimea.

The cessation of these institutions' work for Ukraine has led to the loss of a significant number of highly qualified specialists in oceanology, marine ecology, and marine resource management.

Before 2014, Crimean experts constituted 100% of NAS academicians and corresponding members in these fields under the Department of Earth Sciences. Furthermore, most of Ukraine's doctors and candidates of

Ukraine has been effectively left without scientific centers and organizations capable of collecting and processing information about the state of the marine environment or developing applied diagnostic and prognostic software systems. These systems previously provided critical information to Ukrainian stakeholders regarding the resources of the Black Sea, its coastal areas, estuaries, and river mouths.

Some higher education institutions that trained specialists in marine fields were also located in Crimea and are no longer accessible to Ukraine.

The interruption of educational and research processes has destroyed scientific schools, halted international contacts, and brought joint international studies to a standstill.

In the second stage of the research, a combination of automated and manual approaches was employed to identify scientific publications associated with the affected institutions. Machine-assisted searches were conducted using scientometric databases, leveraging metadata such as ISSN numbers, journal titles, and publisher information to locate relevant academic journals. These databases provided a structured and efficient way to filter and retrieve publications potentially linked to the institutions that were identified in the first stage.

In parallel, manual verification was performed for each institution to ensure comprehensive coverage and accuracy. This involved reviewing the official websites, archives, and available records of the institutions to identify any scientific journals they may have published. Special attention was given to publications that might not be indexed in major scientometric databases, particularly smaller or regionally-focused journals that could have limited visibility.

This dual approach combining automated searches with meticulous manual verification was essential to ensure the completeness of the data. It also allowed researchers to cross-check and validate findings, ensuring that no relevant scientific publication was overlooked in the process. The results of this stage formed the foundation for a detailed analysis of publishing activities and their compliance with academic and legal standards.

During the course of the research, several notable issues were identified. One significant example concerns the Kerch Maritime Technological University, which is the publisher of the journal *Visnyk of the Maritime University*. A detailed examination of the journal's records revealed discrepancies in its official registration information.

When accessing the ISSN database, it becomes apparent that the journal is listed as being registered in Rostov-on-Don, Russia. However, the publisher Kerch Maritime Technological University is legally based in Kerch, Crimea, a territory internationally recognized as part of Ukraine but currently under occupation. This discrepancy raises serious concerns about the manipulation of legal and institutional frameworks to align with the occupier's jurisdiction (Fig. 1).

The registration of the journal in Rostov-on-Don creates a facade of legitimacy under Russian control, undermining the principles of international law and academic integrity. By transferring the journal's legal registration to Russia, the occupying forces aim to erase its Ukrainian origin and reframe it as a Russian publication. This practice not only violates Ukraine's sovereignty but also highlights broader issues of academic appropriation and the weaponization of research outputs in occupied territories.

Moreover, the situation complicates the traceability and accountability of the journal's operations. The shift in registration might allow the publisher to bypass international sanctions and gain access to Russian academic and scientometric networks while distancing itself from its original jurisdiction. It also poses challenges for bibliometric analysis and complicates the accurate attribution of academic outputs to their rightful institutions and regions.

This case exemplifies the systematic efforts to integrate occupied academic institutions and their outputs into the Russian educational and scientific infrastructure. Such practices represent a breach of international norms and highlight the need for targeted measures to protect academic sovereignty and ensure the integrity of scholarly communication originating from occupied regions.

Another example is the registration of scientific journals with a Ukrainian ISSN at the Book Chamber of Ukraine (Fig. 2). This matter requires a comprehensive and meticulous review by the Book Chamber, particularly to address the issue of publications registered from occupied territories. The presence of such journals within the national registry raises critical concerns about their

The screenshot shows a bibliographic record for the journal "Vestnik Kerčenskogo gosudarstvennogo morskogo tehnologičeskogo universiteta". The record is displayed in a web interface with a sidebar on the left containing ISSN information (ISSN: 2619-0605, Linking ISSN (ISSN-L): 2619-0605) and a "Links" section with buttons for Google, Bing, Yahoo, and Russian State Library. The main content area is titled "Key-title Vestnik Kerčenskogo gosudarstvennogo morskogo tehnologičeskogo universiteta" and includes a "Resource information" section. This section lists various titles in different languages and alphabets, including the original Cyrillic title "Вестник Керченского государственного морского технологического университета" and the English title "Bulletin of the Kerch State Marine Technological University". It also lists multiple corporate contributors, including "Azovskij naučno-issledovatel'skij institut rybnogo hozjajstva" and "Kerčenskij gosudarstvennyj morskoy tehnologičeskij universitet". A small map in the top right corner shows the location of Rostov-on-Don, and the ROAD logo is visible in the bottom right.

Fig. 1. The journals from the Kerch (Crimea) registered as from Rostov-on-Don

The screenshot shows a bibliographic record for the journal "Bülleten' Gosudarstvennogo Nikitskogo botaničeskogo sada". The record is displayed in a web interface with a sidebar on the left containing ISSN information (ISSN: 0513-1634, Linking ISSN (ISSN-L): 0513-1634) and a "Links" section with buttons for Google, Bing, and Yahoo. The main content area is titled "Key-title Bülleten' Gosudarstvennogo Nikitskogo botaničeskogo sada" and includes a "Resource information" section. This section lists the title in Cyrillic "Бюллетень Государственного Никитского ботанического сада" and the English title "Bulletin of the State Nikita Botanical Gardens". It also lists other variant titles and identifies the country as Ukraine and the medium as Print. Below the "Resource information" section is a "Record information" section, which includes the last modification date (19/02/2024), the type of record (Confirmed), and the ISSN Center responsible for the record (ISSN Centre for Ukraine). A note at the bottom of the record information section states: "For all potential issues concerning this bibliographic record (missing or wrong data etc.), please contact the ISSN National Centre mentioned above by clicking on the link."

Fig. 2. Journal from Crimea registered in Ukrainian ISSN Center

compliance with Ukrainian legislation, the accuracy of metadata, and potential misuse of scientific platforms for propagandistic or illegitimate purposes.

A systematic approach to identifying and managing these journals is essential. This includes creating a clear framework for verifying the origin of submissions, ensuring proper affiliation of authors and institutions, and maintaining the credibility of Ukraine’s national bibliographic and scientometric systems. Additionally, collaboration with international ISSN agencies and partners could help align national practices with global standards, strengthening the reputation of Ukrainian research outputs on the global stage.

The registration process must not only focus on technical and procedural aspects but also consider the broader implications for national security, scientific integrity, and the resilience of Ukraine’s research infrastructure in the context of ongoing challenges. A proactive and transparent strategy led by the Book Chamber of Ukraine can play a pivotal role in safeguarding the credibility of Ukrainian science and ensuring it remains a trusted part of the global academic community.

The majority of journals from the occupied territories are simply registered through the Russian ISSN Center without specifying the exact city or the affiliated scientific institution of the publisher (Fig. 3). This lack of transparency raises significant concerns about the integrity and authenticity of these publications. By omitting specific details, such as the geographical location or institutional affiliation, these journals create ambiguity about their origins, undermining their credibility and potentially violating international norms for ISSN registration.

Another method of registering scientific journals from Crimea involves registering them abroad. As illustrated in the example below, a journal affiliated with the so-called Crimean Federal University was registered in 2015 by the International ISSN Center in Paris (Fig. 4). This practice highlights a significant loophole in the global ISSN registration system, allowing publications from occupied territories to gain international recognition under the guise of legitimacy.

Such cases raise serious concerns about the violation of international law and the misuse of global bibliographic systems to legitimize academic institutions established under illegal occupation. By registering journals abroad, occupying authorities bypass scrutiny, enabling these publications to circulate within the international academic community without clear identification of their origins or affiliations. This not only undermines Ukraine’s sovereignty but also damages the integrity of the global scientific publishing ecosystem.

To address this issue, the relevant state authorities in Ukraine must conduct a thorough audit of such cases and formally appeal to the international community, including the ISSN Inter-

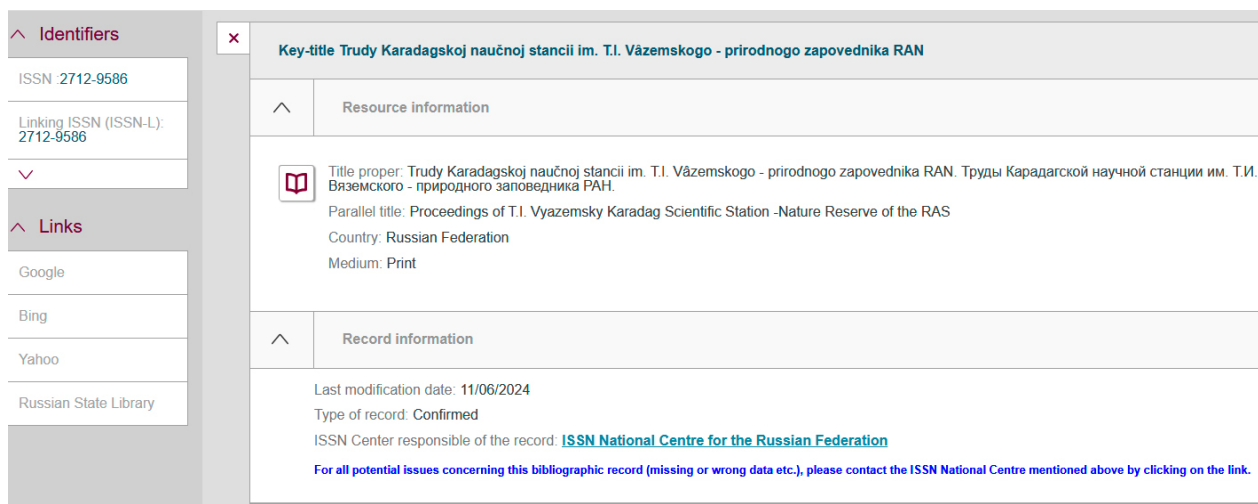


Fig. 3. A scientific journal registered with the Russian ISSN Center without indicating the publisher’s location

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Прием статей производится по следующим направлениям:

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Fig. 4. A journal affiliated with the so-called Crimean Federal University was registered in 2015 by the International ISSN Center in Paris

national Centre and UNESCO, which oversees the ISSN system. Advocacy efforts should aim to raise awareness about the implications of allowing journals from occupied territories to enter the global academic landscape unchallenged. Clear policies and stricter verification mechanisms must be introduced to ensure that no journal from occupied territories can be registered or recognized internationally without proper scrutiny of its origins and adherence to international standards.

CONCLUSIONS

The annexation of Crimea has severely disrupted scientific and educational institutions, impacting a wide range of disciplines and facilities. Research highlights systematic efforts by occupying forces to appropriate academic outputs, including the registration of journals under Russian jurisdiction to obscure their Ukrainian origins. This practice undermines international law, academic integrity, and bibliometric accuracy, while complicating sanctions enforcement. A dual approach of manual verification and scientometric analysis is essential to document the scale of these issues and advocate for international measures to safeguard academic sovereignty and prevent the misuse of research outputs from occupied territories.

Analyzing this situation highlights several key challenges. First, the lack of specific information impedes the ability of Ukrainian and international institutions to track and verify the authenticity of these journals. Second, the registration of these publications under a foreign system undermines

Ukraine's sovereignty and national bibliographic records, particularly during an active conflict. Finally, the absence of clear affiliation raises concerns about the quality and reliability of the research published in these journals, potentially eroding trust in the broader academic community.

Addressing this issue requires a multi-faceted response. Ukrainian authorities, particularly the Book Chamber of Ukraine and relevant scientometric bodies, should conduct a detailed audit to identify journals originating from the occupied territories. Efforts should also be made to raise awareness among international ISSN agencies about the misuse of registration practices in these cases, advocating for stricter policies and greater transparency in the global ISSN system. Moreover, Ukraine should continue to work on strengthening its own scientometric systems, ensuring that all publications registered within its framework meet rigorous standards of transparency, affiliation, and authenticity.

The registration of journals from occupied territories by the Russian ISSN Center without clear affiliation represents a deliberate attempt to obscure their origins and undermine academic integrity. A coordinated and strategic response is necessary to safeguard Ukraine's scientific reputation and uphold the principles of transparency and accountability in global scientific publishing.

The registration of journals from the occupied territories, such as Crimea, by international organizations not only legitimizes the actions of occupying authorities but also poses a threat to the integrity of global scientific collaboration. It is imperative for Ukraine, in collaboration with international partners, to take decisive action to prevent such cases in the future, advocate for the exclusion of these journals from global bibliographic databases, and safeguard the principles of academic integrity and international law.

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Під час підготовки цієї роботи автори використовували Gemini 3 для перекладу та редагування тексту. Після використання цього інструменту/сервісу автори перевірили та відредагували вміст за потреби та несуть повну відповідальність за зміст публікації.

ПРОБЛЕМАТИКА НАУКОВИХ ПУБЛІКАЦІЙ НА ОКУПОВАНИХ ТЕРИТОРІЯХ ЯК СКЛАДОВА ДЕРЖАВНОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ У СФЕРІ НДДКР НА ПРИКЛАДІ КРИМУ

Анотація.

Вступ. У дослідженні розглядаються підходи та труднощі ідентифікації й аналізу наукових публікацій із тимчасово окупованої території Криму, зокрема діяльність видавців, журналів та наукових установ, що функціонують у цьому регіоні. Поточна геополітична ситуація, обмежений доступ до інформаційних ресурсів і низька представленість місцевих видань у міжнародних наукометричних базах суттєво ускладнюють збір і верифікацію даних про наукову діяльність. **Методи.** У дослідженні застосовано комбінований підхід, що поєднує ручний пошук і використання наукових баз даних. Проведено цілеспрямований ручний пошук для виявлення видавців, наукових установ та організацій, пов'язаних із виданням журналів у досліджуваному регіоні. Додатково використано наукові бази даних для отримання метаданих, зокрема ISSN, що дозволило уточнити ідентифікацію відповідних видань. **Аналіз.** Основну увагу приділено подоланню обмежень, пов'язаних із доступом до ресурсів, зокрема сайтів у російському домені, недостатньою індексацією журналів у міжнародних базах та фрагментованістю доступної інформації. Для компенсації цих обмежень застосовано додаткові підходи, включаючи використання професійних контактів, локальних академічних мереж і зіставлення даних із різних джерел. **Результати.** Отримані результати засвідчили, що поєднання ручного пошуку та аналізу даних із наукових баз дозволяє ідентифікувати частину релевантних публікацій і установ. Водночас доступ до повної, актуальної та систематизованої інформації залишається обмеженим, що впливає на повноту відтворення наукового середовища регіону. **Висновки.** Дослідження підтверджує складність аналізу наукової діяльності на

окупованих територіях та підкреслює необхідність використання адаптивних і багатокомпонентних методичних підходів. Подальші дослідження, а також розширення міжнародної співпраці є важливими для формування більш повного уявлення про стан наукової сфери в таких умовах і забезпечення дотримання принципів академічної доброчесності

Ключові слова: наукові журнали, реєстрація ISSN, бібліометричний аналіз, окуповані території, міжнародне право, наукометричні системи.

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