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DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-342-2-7>

IMAGE OF UKRAINE IN MODERN MEDIA SPACE

ОБРАЗ УКРАЇНИ В СУЧАСНОМУ МЕДІАПРОСТОРИ

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Ukraine has become one of the most discussed countries in the world in recent years. On the one hand, it is connected with the war in the east of the country, which has been going on since 2014 and has already become the biggest crisis in Europe after the Second World War. On the other hand, Ukraine has become a significant player in the geopolitical processes which

take place in the world. This had a significant impact on the image of Ukraine in the media space. In addition, recent events in Ukraine, in particular, full-scale Russian aggression in 2022, caused even more changes in country perception in the world media space.

The **purpose** of this study is to analyze the image of Ukraine in the modern media space, in particular in connection with the war and changes in the world political situation.

The war in Ukraine is a complex and urgent theme that needs attention and reflection in the media space. It has a significant impact on millions of people's lives, as well as on the country economy and security. In this regard, it is important that the media focuses on informing the public about the development of the conflict and its consequences, as well as on diplomatic efforts to resolve the situation.

Due to Russian Federation full-scale invasion the war became an essential component of the image of Ukraine in the international community. Unfortunately, the war in Ukraine led to destroyed cities and villages, thousands of dead and wounded, internally displaced persons, economic losses and other social problems. This is reflected in the image of Ukraine that is being formed in the world media space.

The image of the country is the idea or perception of people about the state, which is formed on the basis of various factors, such as history, culture, geography, economy, politics and other aspects of the country's life. The image of a country can be a reflection of its positive and negative characteristics, such as the level of economic development, political stability, cultural traditions, natural beauty, etc. The image of a country can influence many aspects, such as tourism, investment, international relations, politics and others. A positive image of the country can increase the number of tourists, investors and political partners interested in cooperation with it. On the other hand, a negative image can cause a decrease in interest in the country and its products, as well as a decrease in trust in it [2]. Mass media plays an important role in developing the image of the state. They can influence the perception of the country in the world and in its own country. If the mass media focuses on negative aspects of the state, this can lead to the formation of a negative image of the state in the international community and among the country's population. On the other hand, if the mass media describes the country positively, it can help to attract more foreign investment and tourists [5].

Mass media influences the image of the state with the help of various formats, such as news and articles, television programs, radio, social networks and others. Each of these formats has its advantages and disadvantages in forming the image of the state. For example, television programs and YouTube videos are more effective for showing cultural and natural attractions of a country, while news and articles are more effective for showing the political

and economic state of a country. Mass media uses different styles and formats to develop the image of the state. A positive image can be formed with the help of promotional videos with beautiful landscapes and cultural events. On the other hand, the mass media shows important news and information about issues, which help to maintain objectivity [6].

Before the war the image of Ukraine in the mass media was formed in various aspects, depending on specific sources and context. On the one hand, there were positive materials about the country's successes after economic renewal and democratization, such as the growth of tourism, the high quality of Ukrainian products, and others. On the other hand, there were materials about corruption, economic instability and political turbulence.

For example, before the war the Ukrainian mass media often emphasized the country's successes on the international arena, in particular, signing the association agreement with the European Union. Mass media also paid attention to the development of Ukrainian culture and art, as well as to the beauty and historical monuments of Ukraine [7]. "The Guardian" newspaper published the article "Ukraine: Pearl of the East", where it was emphasized that Ukraine is becoming more and more popular among tourists, thanks to its historical monuments and beautiful areas. Ukraine was also presented in the mass media as a country actively working on reforms and European integration. For example, in the article "Ukraine takes first steps towards European integration" on "Deutsche Welle" website, it was noted that Ukraine is trying to become more open to the world and reform its laws. Cultural events and achievements of Ukraine in this direction were actively highlighted in mass media. For example, in the article "Culture of Ukraine at the international level" on "Ukrainska Pravda" portal, it was noted about the successes of Ukrainian artists, musicians and writers abroad.

However, unfortunately, there were also numerous materials showing Ukraine in a negative light, in particular, regarding corruption and low quality of life of most citizens. According to international studies, Ukraine was one of the most corrupt countries in the world before the start of the war, and this was often emphasized in the mass media. Many materials drew attention to the problems related to the economy, poverty, unemployment, instability and other social problems in the country [1]. The mass media actively discussed the problem of corruption in Ukraine [3]. Materials were published about poverty and the low standard of living of most Ukrainians. Many mass media wrote about how Ukrainians are moving abroad en masse, looking for better living conditions. Ukrainian mass media also featured quite a lot of materials about political scandals and conflicts, violations of human rights and democracy. For example, the topic of pressure on the mass media, particularly from the government and political forces, was often discussed. Ukraine was also portrayed in the mass media as a country where ethnic and religious

conflicts occur quite often. Mass media wrote about conflicts between Ukrainians and Russians, as well as between different nationalities and religious groups. Here are the headlines of some articles that described Ukraine in a negative light: "Poroshenko failed to fight corruption in Ukraine"; "Violence and chaos on the surface in Ukraine"; "Ukraine has become a place of mass emigration of the population abroad"; "Tens of thousands of Ukrainians protested because of the low standard of living"; "Russians in Western Ukraine are threatened with ethnic cleansing".

Today, the world media constantly publishes materials about the military situation, the lives of people on the front lines, as well as about Russian war crimes committed in Ukraine. In particular, a lot of foreign media publications talk about the operations of Ukrainian army, humanitarian aid from Western partners, and the heroic deeds of Ukrainians on the front lines. The image of Ukraine in the mass media has become more positive: our state is positioned as a country fighting for its rights and independence.

Comparing the image of Ukraine in the mass media before and after the start of the war, we can point out the following: before the war, Ukraine in the mass media usually appeared in a negative light, attention was focused on the problems of corruption and the low quality of life of the population. At that time, mass media did not pay great attention to the achievements of Ukraine in many areas, such as science, culture, sports, economy and others. However, with the beginning of the war, the image of Ukraine in the mass media changed radically. The mass media describes the combat operations and the war consequences in detail, focusing on Ukraine's struggle for its independence and territorial integrity. It tells in detail about the victims and heroes of the war, about the difficulties and experiences of Ukrainians living in the conflict zone, about the thousands of volunteers and military personnel who defend the country. As a result, the image of Ukraine in the mass media became more positive and heroic, with an emphasis on the struggle for the country's independence and freedom. The mass media also helped to draw attention to the needs of the local population and the importance of humanitarian aid. However, it is worth noting that some mass media still portrays Ukraine in a negative light, claiming problems with human rights and press freedom in Ukraine.

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