

SOCIAL AND LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY

DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-478-8-12>

PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS AND ASPECTS OF THE FORMATION OF UKRAINIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY IN A CRISIS PERIOD

ПСИХОЛОГІЧНІ ВИМІРИ І АСПЕКТИ СТАНОВЛЕННЯ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ В КРИЗОВИЙ ПЕРІОД

Berezhnyi I. O. **Бережний І. О.**

*PhD student at the Faculty of Psychology
and Social Technologies*

*Private Higher Education Establishment
“European University”
Kyiv, Ukraine*

*аспірант факультету психології
та соціальних технологій*

*ПВНЗ «Європейський університет»
м. Київ, Україна*

The study of the process of national identity formation remains highly relevant in the 21st century, despite the significant time elapsed since the beginning of the era of national identities in Europe. Ukraine, like other European states, faces challenges and influences that shape its national consciousness. However, compared to countries with a long history of national identity development, such as Germany, the United Kingdom, and France, there are several important differences:

1. Historical Context and Nation Formation: Ukrainian national identity has developed under the influence of several empires and has a complex history related to the loss of independence and changes in political regimes. This has left a significant mark on the formation of Ukrainian national identity.

2. Cultural and Linguistic Heritage: Ukrainian national identity is inseparably linked to its unique cultural and linguistic heritage; however, it is significantly influenced by other cultures and languages present in neighboring regions.

3. Geopolitical Environment: Ukraine is a frontier country located at the crossroads of various civilizations. This has led to complex relationships and conflicts that impact the formation of national identity, and society has gone through difficult stages that can be traced in its history.

4. History of Statehood: Unlike Western European countries, which have had sovereign states for an extended period, Ukraine is only beginning

its journey towards sovereignty, with historical attempts to establish a state often ending in failure and assimilation.

5. Value System and Societal Characteristics: Although the declarative values in Ukraine and Western European countries are similar, their implementation differs significantly. In Western Europe, large companies dominate their sectors, leading people to prefer employment with these firms rather than starting their own businesses. In contrast, Ukrainian society has several monopolies, remnants of the Soviet Union, while private businesses have filled areas where monopolies are absent and state regulation has been minimized. The service industry, handmade enterprises, and small private military technology companies that emerged during the war with Russia are actively developing. This prevalence of military technology firms may seem unusual to developed countries but reflects the relative youth of the Ukrainian market. Moreover, the situation in which businesses formed and the mentality of Ukrainians are crucial. Freedom is the greatest value of Ukrainian society, particularly evident in 2022 when Russia launched a large-scale invasion. At the onset of the war, people united to fill non-functioning institutions, playing a key role in supporting society while the state struggled to recover and organize.

As noted by Voropayeva T. S. [1, p. 334], the primary problem in the development of Ukrainian society and the state is the insufficient attention to Ukrainianness, the slow formation of civil society, the Ukrainian political nation, and contemporary Ukrainian identity among a large part of the population. The reason for this lies in the incompleteness of state-building and nation-forming processes, the legacy of Soviet identity, and its blending with post-Soviet identity, which, in fact, preserves a Soviet orientation. These issues are further complicated by the responses to challenges characterizing the 21st century, such as stagnation in political and economic processes, and crises in ideas and worldviews. The lack of strategic vision for the world and one's own role in it, coupled with constant uncertainty regarding the path of development, has led to stagnation and the persistence of the aforementioned problems.

If we conditionally divide the stages of the formation of Ukrainian national identity in the post-Soviet era based on the criterion of development dynamics, we can identify two periods:

1. **Period of Stagnation:** This period begins with the onset of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, excluding the actual phase of dissolution and the two years following it due to the inertia of preceding processes. It concludes just before the start of the Revolution of Dignity.

2. **Period of Crises:** This period includes the Revolution of Dignity, the hybrid war, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the full-scale war with the Russian Federation. It is marked by significant events and conflicts that influence the

formation of Ukrainian national identity, with identity formation occurring at a relatively rapid pace.

There is a significant difference between the two aforementioned periods. In peacetime, when there are no serious challenges, the strengthening of national identity is fostered by the realization of the national idea and the successful development of the state, allowing citizens to feel pride in their country and nation. In wartime, this process is defined by victory over the enemy. This idea can be further elaborated and generalized: during times of challenge, regardless of their nature (war, pandemic, economic crisis, etc.), victory lies in overcoming the challenge itself, in the ability to respond appropriately and choose the most optimal way to solve the problem. According to V. Y. Vinkov [2, 140], each significant societal event poses a serious threat to the preservation of identity, which can lead to an identity crisis. This is important, as the mere existence of a problem does not always encourage societal unity in overcoming an unfavorable situation.

History provides examples where such unity did not occur, and society was exhausted or unable to maintain cohesion during prolonged confrontation, leading to defeat. Fortunately, there are reasons to believe that in the context of the formation of Ukrainian national identity, we are witnessing significant shifts, especially during times of crisis. There are already noticeable signs of change within Ukrainian society, as well as shifts in the understanding of the nature of global processes at the level of the global community. These two developments inspire optimism.

As noted by O. Y. Kukharuk [3, 77] emphasizes the role of social identity in social resilience, particularly during crises, where it can manifest in shared fate and empathy. Before the onset of the war, Ukrainian society was fragmented into local identities; however, during the wartime events, it united around the idea of defending the country. The formation of a nationwide Ukrainian identity occurred spontaneously through informal groups and communities, as well as via informal channels of information and interpersonal communication. The volunteer movement at the beginning of the war took on the organizational and coordination burden until state mechanisms could catch up. Despite these developments, the process of national consciousness formation remains unfinished, marked by panic and infantilism, which are significant factors in the societal response to challenges. Nevertheless, the best way to overcome these issues is through active communication between society and the state.

As noted by L. M. Korobka [4, 87] noted that identities, as processes and conditions of existence or becoming, are constantly renewed, established, or altered at both the individual and collective levels. Indeed, identity should be viewed not as a monolithic entity but as a "multiplicity" of modern identities. This characteristic allows for the analysis of identity at various levels,

including individual, collective, and communal. By analyzing the connections and interactions of different community identities, one can assert the complexity, dynamism, and variability of the interrelations among various types of identities (from individual to collective), suggesting that their interactions can be both contradictory and conflictual, as well as harmonious and integral.

Therefore, the concept of national identity has a complex structure, as it encompasses social, group, and individual aspects that are constantly changing and interacting with one another. The factors influencing the formation of national identity are diverse in structure and form, and they are studied from various perspectives: philosophical, which views identity as a process of choosing one's belonging and the basis of unity; sociological, which perceives identity as the result of a complex interaction of external and internal factors; and social-psychological, which analyzes the mechanisms of identity formation, transformation, and construction.

The context of the formation and change of national identity is also significant, as crisis periods are critical moments in these processes that require responses from individuals, groups, and society. Although these processes may take significantly less time during crises than in peaceful times, they always demand flexibility, adaptability, and sensitivity from society. National identity is dynamic and responsive to all aspects of human and social life, and its formation is always in a state of constant change. Thus, the process of forming national identity has a complex nature and consists of many components and intricate influencing factors, which makes the study of this issue relevant even today.

Література:

1. Воропаєва Т. С. Формування національної європейської ідентичності громадян України: теоретико-імперичні аспекти (1993–2010 роки). Наукові студії із соціальної та політичної психології. 2011. Вип. 26 (29). С. 333–343.
2. Вінков В. Безпекові аспекти розвитку ідентичності в умовах війни. Проблеми політичної психології. 2022. Т. 26. С. 138–150.
3. Кухарук О. Ідентичнісний вимір соціальної резильєнтності: визначення, підходи, можливості прогнозування. Проблеми політичної психології. 2022. Т. 26. С. 77–90.
4. Коробка Л. Види спільнотних ідентичностей: проблеми трансформації та взаємодії в умовах війни. Проблеми політичної психології. 2023. Т. 13. С. 86–97.