

CHAPTER I

SHAPING THE IMAGE OF THE STATE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA: CHALLENGES, PROSPECTS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

1.1. The Impact of International Communications in Shaping a Country's Image

Vasyl Shynkaruk

Doctor of Philology, Professor

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

03041, 15, Heroyiv Oborony Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

URL: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8589-4995>

Abstract

This study examines the influence of international communications on the shaping of a country's image in the context of the modern globalized world. It outlines key theoretical frameworks for understanding international communications, their impact on global perceptions of a nation, and the factors contributing to the development of a positive national image. The analysis demonstrates that a country's image is primarily shaped by political, economic, and cultural elements, which are actively conveyed through various international communication channels. The role of public diplomacy, international events, and the media landscape in constructing a favorable national image is critically assessed. Additionally, the study investigates the application of contemporary digital technologies, social media, and cross-cultural strategies in enhancing the effectiveness of communications. Specific attention is devoted to the challenges and opportunities associated with the digital age, particularly concerning the proliferation of digital technologies and social media. The research highlights the modern geopolitical challenges, the spread of disinformation, and the prevalence of fake news necessitate the development of effective communication strategies. These strategies must not only mitigate negative influences but also establish a sustainable, positive national image over time. The study concludes that effective management of international communications is a vital tool for enhancing a country's international reputation and reinforcing its position on the global stage. The findings underscore the importance of adopting a strategic approach to the management of international communications, particularly in the face of globalization and the intensifying competition for information dominance. It is established that effective communication contributes to strengthening a country's reputation, fostering trust in its policies and economic potential, and augmenting its influence within the global community. This research provides valuable insights for the development of innovative approaches to bolstering a state's international authority and promoting constructive dialogue between nations. These findings may also inform future theoretical inquiries into the role of cultural diplomacy as a tool for advancing international relations in the cultural and humanitarian sectors.

Keywords: *International communications, state image, public diplomacy, media, globalization.*

Introduction

The modern world is characterized by the dynamic development of international communications, which play a crucial role in shaping the image of states on the global stage. In a world where information spreads instantaneously, nations compete not only for political or economic influence but also for the attention and trust of the international community. A country's image is not merely its reputation in the eyes of citizens of other nations; it is also a strategic asset that affects diplomatic relations, the investment climate, tourism development, and the attraction of international aid. In this context, the role of international communications becomes pivotal, as they create opportunities for promoting national values, showcasing achievements, and cultivating a positive perception of the state worldwide.

The relevance of this study is determined by the growing competition among countries for the attention of a global audience, as well as the increasing influence of information technologies and social media, which have significantly transformed communication methods. In this context, it becomes critically important to understand how international communications shape the perceptions of a state, its policies, culture, and economic accomplishments.

Contemporary geopolitical challenges, disinformation, and fake news highlight the need for effective communication strategies capable of not only countering negative influences but also establishing a long-lasting positive image. Investigating this issue contributes to the development of innovative approaches to strengthening a state's international authority and fostering constructive dialogue between nations. Thus, the study of the impact of international communications on shaping a country's image is vital for understanding current trends in international relations and enhancing public diplomacy practices.

The issue of the impact of international communications on shaping a country's image has been studied worldwide by representatives of various academic fields, including political science, philosophy, social technology theory, and communication theory. Numerous foreign scholars have contributed to this area. S. Anholt (2020)¹ describes the challenges faced by the world and proposes new, informative, practical, and innovative solutions, while earlier S. Anholt (2007)² argues that countries, cities, and regions can create their own image. J. Cull Nicholas (2023)³, who specializes in public diplomacy and the role of international communications in shaping a country's image, analyzes how the security of a nation's reputation depends on what is known and how it is valued globally.

¹ Anholt Simon (2020) *The Good Country Equation*. URL: <https://goodcountry.org/book/>

² Anholt Simon (2007). *Competitive Identity: The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions*. URL: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/9780230627727>

³ Cull Nicholas J. (2023). *Reputational Security: Refocusing Public Diplomacy for a Dangerous World*. URL: [https://www.wiley.com/en-us/Reputational+Security%3A+Refocusing+Public+Diplomacy+for+a+Dangerous+ World-p-9781509559275](https://www.wiley.com/en-us/Reputational+Security%3A+Refocusing+Public+Diplomacy+for+a+Dangerous+World-p-9781509559275)

A. David (2013)⁴ discusses the role of branding in building a global world, highlighting that in post-Soviet or post-imperial states, there is a lack of trust in the state apparatus, which is further exacerbated by the absence of direct experience with democratic processes.

In the modern world, where business contacts increasingly extend beyond national borders, the ability to communicate while considering cultural and linguistic differences has become an essential component of successful cooperation.

Numerous Polish scholars have contributed to the study of international and intercultural communications. In particular, the importance of processes related to intercultural communication has been emphasized in the works of G. Zarzycka (2000)⁵; the causes of communicative failures and barriers in the intercultural space were studied by M. Golka (2008)⁶ and E. Kołodziejek (2007)⁷; the styles of intercultural communication were researched by E. Sławkowa (2006)⁸; and the manipulation of citizens' consciousness was examined by M. Iłowiecki (2003)⁹.

Ukrainian scholars have contributed significantly to the study of the impact of international communications on shaping and perceiving a country's image on the global stage. Specifically, L. Kormych and K. Savon (2021)¹⁰ argue that "particular attention should be paid to the process of forming a country's image as part of communication aimed at establishing political power, recognizing the country on the international arena, and shaping public opinion". U. Ilnytska (2024)¹¹ explores branding strategies as a priority vector of international communications in modern states, analyzing foreign experiences of national branding and highlighting effective branding strategies of contemporary European states (Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Poland, and the Baltic states).

⁴ David Adam (2013). 21st Century Public Diplomacy. Towards Good Governance in the 21st Century: The Role of Place-Branding in Building Global Civil Society. Political and Economic Context. Cultural diplomacy. URL: http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/content/pdf/participant-papers/2013-12-annual/21st_Century_Public_Diplomacy_David_Adam.pdf

⁵ Zarzycka G. (2000). Dialog międzykulturowy. Teoria oraz opis komunikowania się cudzoziemców przyswajających język polski, Łódź, 2000 [in Polish]. URL: <https://search.worldcat.org/title/Dialog-miedzykulturowy--teoria-oraz-opis-komunikowania-sie-cudzoziemcow-przyswajajacych-jezyk-polski/oclc/48954452>

⁶ Golka M. (2008). Bariery w komunikowaniu i społeczeństwo (dez)informacyjne. Warszawa. S. 35.

⁷ Kołodziejek E. (2007). Człowiek i świat w języku subkultur. Szczecin. URL: https://repozytorium.uwb.edu.pl/jspui/bitstream/11320/9407/3/BAJ_8_2008_B_Nowowiejski_rec_Ewa_Kolodziejek_Czlowiek_i_swiat_w_jezyku_subkultur.pdf

⁸ Sławkowa E. (2006). Conversational styles in the perspective of intercultural communication. *Conversational styles* / Ed. B. Witosz. Katowice. S. 71 [in Polish].

⁹ Iłowiecki M. (2003). Distorted mirror / M. Iłowiecki. Lublin. 230 p. [in Polish]. URL: <https://lubimyczytac.pl/ksiazka/165893/krzywe-zwierciadlo-o-manipulacji-w-mediach>

¹⁰ Kormych L. I., Savon K. V. (2021). Symbolic aspects of a state's image in political communication. *Actual problems of politics*, 6. P. 19–23. URL: http://app.nuoua.od.ua/archive/68_2021/5.pdf

¹¹ Ilnytska U. V. (2024). Branding strategies in the international communications of modern states / Political problems of international systems and global development. P. 141–147 [in Ukrainian]. URL: http://politicus.od.ua/2_2024/23.pdf

L. Khorishko et al. (2021)¹ focus on studying the resource potential of public diplomacy and its use in political branding in Germany, exemplified by the “Country of Ideas” campaign, which presents Germany as an active participant in the international political space, oriented toward the use of cutting-edge technologies in all spheres of society for sustainable development. I. Yermeeva (2021)² examines the practical aspects of forming a state’s international image through the analysis of contemporary state image-making directions and the influence of diplomatic technologies on creating an effective international state image.

O. Yurchenko (2024)³ studies the essence and tasks of public diplomacy in supporting a country’s image, highlighting the practical aspects of implementing adopted strategic documents, the state of Ukraine’s foreign policy, and the use of public diplomacy tools to support and promote the country’s international image. M. Kyrylenko (2023)⁴ formulates a universal list of factors influencing the formation of a country’s international image based on the most widespread approaches presented by scholars, proving that, at the current stage of international relations development, there is no universally accepted set of factors for shaping a country’s international image.

N. Kinash (2022)⁵ draws attention to contemporary aspects of international security, as one of the main external factors determining Ukraine’s national security, emphasizing the creation of new and effective mechanisms for joint state action against international threats emerging at the current stage of human existence, as well as the formation of deterrence and balance mechanisms among the major security systems of the modern world.

However, an examination of recent publications reveals a lack of research focused on studying the impact of international communications on shaping a country’s image in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian war. There is a need to supplement the analysis by incorporating the principles of international relations theory regarding the key factors dedicated to finding effective public diplomacy tools to support the international image of a state. Given the importance and relevance of the topic of forming and maintaining a positive national image on the international stage, the specifics of using international communication mechanisms for its promotion require further study.

¹ Khorishko L., Kovpak. V. (2021). Public diplomacy as a tool for the formation of the political brand of Germany. *Reality of Politics Estimates – Comments – Forecasts. Quarterly*, 17 (3), 74 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://czasopisma.marszalek.com.pl/images/pliki/rop/17/rop1704.pdf>

² Yermeeva I. (2021) Practical aspects of formation international image of the state. *Regional studies*, 24. Uzhhorod : Publishing House “Helvetika”. WITH. 123–127 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <http://regionalstudies.uzhnu.uz.ua/archive/24/19.pdf>

³ Yurchenko O. (2024). Public diplomacy as a form of international communications, its role in shaping the image of Ukraine. *Economy and society*, 64 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://elibrary.kubg.edu.ua/id/eprint/49569/>

⁴ Kyrylenko M. (2023). Characterization of the factors of formation of the international image of the state. *Scientific bulletin of the Vinnytsia Academy of Continuing Education. Series: Ecology. Public management and administration*, 3, 98–104 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://journals.academ.vinnica.ua/index.php/eco-pa/article/view/49>

⁵ Kinash N. (2022). International security as a factor in the formation of Ukraine’s national security. *Legal scientific electronic journal*, 9, 562–564 [in Ukrainian]. URL: http://lsej.org.ua/9_2022/138.pdf

Materials and Methods

The foundation of our research is based on electronic source databases and media reports. The research methods were grounded in a comprehensive analysis of the impact of international communications on shaping a country's image.

The analysis of public diplomacy policy was a key method for investigating the influence of international communications on the formation of a country's image, as it allowed for the evaluation of strategic approaches and practical tools used for engagement with foreign audiences. This method involved studying official statements, cultural exchange programs, educational initiatives, the role of international media, and social networks aimed at improving the state's reputation. The public diplomacy analysis helped assess how successfully a country achieves its communication goals, which messages are effectively perceived by the audience, and how political context influences the state's image. Additionally, this method helped identify weaknesses in the strategy, such as insufficient authenticity or adaptation to cultural specifics, and developed recommendations for enhancing international communications.

Content analysis as a research method enabled the evaluation of the content of publications, TV programs, social networks, and other media channels that contribute to creating a particular image of the country in the minds of the international audience. It helped identify key topics, messages, stylistic features, and emotional tones that dominate the media space. By analyzing aspects such as frequency of mentions, context, tone, and sources of information, conclusions were drawn regarding the effectiveness of the state's communication strategies and the impact of international media on the perception of its image.

SWOT analysis allowed for the assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths included the ability to reach a wide audience, effectively transmit key messages, and influence public opinion through various channels. Weaknesses included the risk of misinformation, dependence on content quality, and difficulties in adapting to cultural differences among audiences. Opportunities highlighted the use of cutting-edge digital technologies, social networks, and cross-cultural strategies to enhance communication effectiveness. Threats included competition from other countries, information wars, and the risks of disinformation and manipulation. SWOT analysis helped develop balanced approaches to international communications, considering their impact on the country's image.

Monitoring social media was one of the key research methods to assess the influence of international communications on the formation of a country's image. By analyzing content shared on platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, we evaluated how the audience perceives key messages and state initiatives. This method allowed us to identify trends, the tone of discussions, the popularity of specific topics, and the effectiveness of communication campaigns in real time. It also helped to identify potential crisis situations or disinformation campaigns that could negatively affect the country's image.

The case study method allowed for an in-depth analysis of specific examples of successful or unsuccessful communication strategies and helped evaluate how

certain factors (such as message content, selected channels, and cultural context) affected the audience's perception of the country. It also helped identify the best practices and common mistakes, enabling the improvement of future communication strategies.

Benchmarking enabled comparisons of communication strategies, tools, and results of various countries and helped identify best practices in promoting a positive image, such as through cultural diplomacy, international media campaigns, or participation in global events. Benchmarking allowed us to assess which factors (message tone, platforms used, adaptation to the target audience) contributed to success or, conversely, caused failure. By analyzing the experiences of other countries, competitive advantages, weaknesses in the state's own communication strategy were identified, and recommendations were made for effectively adapting successful solutions to the national context. Scenario modeling allowed for the prediction of the outcomes of various communication strategies in conditions of uncertainty. This approach involved creating hypothetical situations or scenarios, such as launching an international information campaign, responding to crisis events, or conducting large-scale cultural initiatives, to assess their impact on the state's perception by target audiences. Through modeling, different courses of action were tested, their risks and potential evaluated, and their effectiveness predicted, contributing to the adoption of informed decisions in public diplomacy, the development of adaptive strategies, and the minimization of reputational losses. Modeling also helped account for factors such as cultural differences, media dynamics, and competitor reactions, making international communication more resilient and effective.

All stages of the research facilitated a comprehensive examination of the impact of international communications on the formation of a country's image. Each method was essential for achieving the primary objective, i.e., investigating the influence of international communications on shaping a state's image.

Results and Discussion

The growing integration of states into the international community and the development of information technologies present both new opportunities and challenges for maintaining a positive image of a country on the global stage. Like any new paradigm, international communications have yet to receive systematic conceptual understanding among the expert community. The term "communication" derives from Latin *commūnicātiō* 'message'. International communications in academic literature are defined as the interaction and exchange of information between different cultures and national groups. Polish researcher H. Walinska de Hackbeil (1975)¹ identified over 200 definitions of the term in American literature. According to Professor R. Everett (2009)² of the department of Communication and Journalism at the University of New Mexico, "communication is a process through which participants create and share

¹ Walinska de Hackbeil H. (1975). The concept of "communication" in American social communication theory: *autreferat diss .dokt.* University of Wroclaw. 36 c. [in Polish].

² Rogers Everett (2009). *Diffusion of innovations* / E. M. Rogers; trans. from English IN. Stark Kyiv : VD "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy". 591 p. URL: <http://publish-ukma.kiev.ua/ua/katalog/zhurnalistika-ta-pr/70-difuziya-innovacij.html>

information with one another in order to achieve mutual understanding”. For the purposes of our research, the concept of “mutual understanding” is paramount.

There is also a need to develop a theory of image that can thoroughly explain the main manifestations of this phenomenon. O. Shynkaruk (Khortiuk) (2010)³ defines image in its broadest sense as “a deliberately formed image that highlights certain value characteristics, intended to emotionally-psychologically influence anyone for the purposes of popularization, advertising, etc”. This image is formed through communication strategies aimed at highlighting the unique features of culture, economic potential, achievements in science and technology, political stability, and other aspects. A well-formed image of the state is a sign of its successful economic, political, social, and other policies. International communications include diplomatic activities, cultural exchange, participation in global forums, and media presence in global information networks. The successful use of these tools contributes to strengthening trust in the state, increasing its influence, and attracting resources. However, ineffective communication or the spread of negative stereotypes can cause significant damage to a country’s image, which can complicate its foreign policy and economic relations. Thus, the discussion of the impact of international communications on the formation of a state’s image is highly relevant in the context of the global challenges and opportunities faced by countries in the 21st century.

Valuable for contemporary discussions are the ideas of the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, the founder of European philosophy, who, in his treatise *The Republic*, described the ideal image of a state based on principles of justice, harmony, and division of labor. D. Koval (2000)⁴ provided a translation of the treatise from Ancient Greek, in which Plato asserts that an “ideal” state should have at least four virtues: 1) wisdom; 2) courage; 3) prudence; 4) justice. The way a country is perceived by the global community determines its place and significance in the system of international relations. The state’s image influences the success of its foreign policy, the development of trade and economic relations with other countries, and the attraction of investment into its economy. The Russo-Ukrainian war has significantly affected the global perception of Ukraine. Through its struggle for independence and freedom, Ukraine has become a symbol of resilience, democracy, and resistance to Russian aggression. The war has brought international attention to Ukraine and created a platform for dialogue between cultures. Ukraine has garnered support from the entire civilized world – Ukraïner (2022)⁵.

³ Shynkaruk (Khortiuk) O. (2010). Correlation of the concepts “business reputation”, “goodwill”, “image”, “prestige”, “reputation”. *Journal of the Kyiv University of Law / Ukrainian Scientific and Theoretical Journal*. Kyiv. 4, 211–214 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <http://dspace.nbuv.gov.ua/handle/123456789/23704>

⁴ Koval D. (2000). Translation. from ancient Greek. Plato. *State*. Kyiv : Basics. 355 p. [in Ukrainian]. URL: <http://litopys.org.ua/plato/plat.htm>

⁵ Ukraïner (2022). Ukraine is supported by the entire civilized world. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3p0kOGoxuY&ab_channel=Ukra%D1%97ner

Ukraine was unable to build its own national image during the process of statehood formation, as A. Osmolovska (2021)¹ notes, due to the influence of the neighboring country, Russia, in the information space. In the early 1990s, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Moscow could not accept that Ukraine had become an independent state, as Russia without Ukraine would never be an empire and would be incapable of claiming global dominance. Russia has for centuries influenced the formation of the image of Ukraine as a “brotherly nation”. Russian media flooded not only Russia but also Ukraine, Europe, and the entire world with false information. The Russian authorities have spread and continue to spread disinformation, creating fake news. M. Howiecki (2003)² explored the issue of manipulating citizens’ consciousness. One in five residents of the European Union did not see the difference between Ukraine and Russia, and for one in ten, the Ukrainian state was associated with poverty. According to V. Yemets (2023)³, “Ukraine needed to convince the international community that it is an independent European state with its own national heritage, rather than serving as a tool for Russia to achieve its geopolitical goals”.

V. Gapiy (2018)⁴ argues that “Propaganda messages constantly broadcast by Russian media are primarily targeted at the population of Russia, residents of southern and eastern Ukraine, and anyone consuming Russian informational content. As a result of Russian propaganda, a negative attitude towards Ukrainians is formed, creating animosity among residents of occupied territories against the Ukrainian government, the Ukrainian army, and instilling the notion of Crimea’s historical belonging to Russia, etc. Ultimately, this contributes to a rise in the approval rating of the Russian president within Russia”.

The full-scale Russian war in Ukrainian territory has shifted the focus of the state’s image, transforming its primary task into defending the state on the information front. Media diplomacy has gained a new dimension, focusing on utilizing the internet and information-communication technologies to address diplomatic tasks. The Russo-Ukrainian war is not only a military conflict but also an informational one. International communication has become a key tool in combating Russian narratives and disinformation. In today’s world, where information spreads rapidly, the importance of clear, truthful, and prompt communication has increased manifold. Russia systematically uses propaganda to advance its geopolitical interests, but thanks to effective international cooperation, governments, organizations, and civil society have united efforts to counter this threat. One of the crucial aspects is supporting independent media and journalists who expose fakes and manipulation. Social

¹ Osmolovska A.O. (2021). Ukraine’s Image Formation Policy in the Information Space of Foreign States After 2014. Qualifying scientific work on manuscript rights [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://abstracts.donnu.edu.ua/article/view/9853>

² Howiecki M. (2003). Distorted mirror. Lublin. 230 p. [in Polish]. URL: <https://lubimyczytac.pl/ksiazka/165893/krzywe-zwierciadlo-o-manipulacji-w-mediach>

³ Yemets V. (2023). Public diplomacy as a tool for forming the image of Ukraine in the conditions of a full-scale war. *Philosophical and political studies*, 46, 291–296 [in Ukrainian].

⁴ Gapiy V. E. (2018). Propaganda as an instrument of influence on the subconscious of a person in modern Ukraine. *A young scientist*, 1, 636–641. URL: [http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/molv_2018_1\(2\)_20](http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/molv_2018_1(2)_20) [in Ukrainian].

networks also play an important role, where international platforms implement fact-checking mechanisms and label false content. Additionally, the active stance of international organizations such as the European Union, NATO, and the United Nations helps disseminate truthful information about global events, particularly the war in Ukraine.

According to T. Varga (2024)⁵, “The use of disinformation is not a new phenomenon, but its impact has become more significant in recent years. Today, disinformation is one of the greatest threats not only to the national security of individual states but also to the entire democratic world, European values, and international security. This tactic is particularly effectively employed by the Russian aggressor in the hybrid war against Ukraine, sowing discord and manipulating public opinion”.

Ukraine, as one of the main targets of Russian propaganda, has become an example of effective information counteraction. Thanks to international partners, campaigns to expose fake news and accurately report real events have gained global resonance. At the same time, the exchange of experiences between countries contributes to the development of new methods to combat disinformation. V. Shynkaruk (2023), as an alternative to Russia’s destructive actions, advocates for the idea of strategic communications, which, at the legislative level, have already become a key element of contemporary globalization processes. These processes involve the exchange of information, ideas, values, and political messages between states and peoples.

Strategic communications play a key role in shaping a state’s image because they ensure the coherent, consistent, and effective transmission of messages to both domestic and international audiences. With a strategic approach to communication, the government can control the narrative about the country, create a positive perception of its politics, culture, and economy. This contributes to increasing trust in state institutions, attracting foreign partners, and strengthening national identity.

States that actively use strategic communications can effectively counter disinformation and information attacks that may negatively impact their international image. They utilize modern digital platforms, diplomatic channels, and media tools to disseminate truthful information and form a positive image of the country in the world. Thus, strategic communications are an important tool for information security and national sovereignty.

In addition to external influence, strategic communications are also significant for internal stability, as they help state institutions establish a dialogue with citizens, explain decisions made, and engage society in the realization of strategic goals. Transparency and consistency in communications build citizens’ trust in the government and promote societal cohesion, which is an essential factor in the development of the state.

In shaping a positive state image, it is essential to consider the functions performed by international communications (Table 1). A key feature of these functions is their

⁵ Varga T. M. (2024). Disinformation and propaganda as tools of Russia’s hybrid war against Ukraine / Electronic scientific publication “Analytical and comparative jurisprudence”. P. 526–531 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://app-journal.in.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/87.pdf>

multidimensionality, as they encompass various cultural, social, economic, and political aspects. Successful international communication considers the language and cultural characteristics of the target audience, ensuring the accuracy of information transmission and avoiding potential misunderstandings. The integration of modern digital technologies, such as social media and online platforms, significantly expands the opportunities for establishing communication and promoting a positive image.

Another crucial aspect is the need to build trust and maintain stable dialogue between parties. Strategic tools, such as public diplomacy, international marketing, and media campaigns, are employed to create a favorable impression. Transparency and consistency in communications are vital components, as reputation largely depends on how the actions of the entity are perceived on the international stage. Thus, international communications require adaptability, cultural sensitivity, and a strategic approach to effectively shape a positive image.

Table 1. Functions of International Communications in Shaping a Positive State Image

Function	Description	Examples of Implementation
Informational	Collection, analysis, and dissemination of reliable information for building a positive image	Holding press conferences, publishing articles, managing social media
Communicative	Ensuring interaction between different cultures, organizations and states	Diplomatic negotiations, international forums, bilateral meetings
Advertising and promotional	Presenting the advantages, achievements, and potential of a country or organization	Launching advertising campaigns, participating in exhibitions, organizing cultural events
Cultural and educational	Promoting culture, traditions and values through international events	Festivals, art exhibitions, student and professional exchange programs
Image-building	Forming an attractive and sustainable image at the international level	Country branding, creating logos and slogans, developing a national PR strategy
Crisis management	Responding to negative situations to minimize reputational risks	Rapid communication in times of crisis, organizing press conferences to clarify the position
Educational	Raising awareness among other countries about history, values and traditions	Educational programs, publishing teaching materials, organizing lectures and seminars
Social and economic	Informing about socio-economic achievements to attract investors and partners	Presenting investment projects, collaborating with international organizations
Mediatory	Conflict resolution and mediation in negotiations	Participation in peacekeeping missions, mediation in international disputes

Source: author's development

In a world where interdependence between countries is becoming deeper, effective communication between states, international organizations, corporations, and civil society plays a strategic role in ensuring stability, especially in the context of global challenges such as regional conflicts. Therefore, one of the most important aspects of international communication is its ability to prevent conflicts. This is achieved through diplomatic negotiations, where countries can identify potential threats and resolve conflict situations before they escalate; through public diplomacy, where the use of informational campaigns and cultural initiatives creates an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding among nations; through regular information exchange between states, which promotes transparency and reduces the risk of misunderstandings and disinformation; and through mass media, which plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and urging governments to peacefully resolve disputes.

Effective diplomacy and well-established communication help parties find common ground, avoid escalation of tensions, and reach compromise solutions. The use of negotiation strategies, mediation, and peacekeeping initiatives helps reduce the risk of conflicts and promotes stability in international relations. International organizations play an important role in preventing conflicts by providing a platform for open dialogue and cooperation between states. For example, the UN, OSCE, and EU actively use diplomatic mechanisms to resolve crises and promote understanding among countries. Additionally, modern technologies and global media help quickly disseminate information, allowing the global community to respond promptly to potential threats and tense situations.

However, the effectiveness of international communication depends on the political will of states, the level of trust between negotiation participants, and their readiness for dialogue. It is essential to consider the historical context and cultural characteristics of each party, which helps avoid misunderstandings. The development of diplomatic relations, cultural exchange, and economic cooperation contributes to strengthening peace and security worldwide, making international communication a key tool in conflict prevention.

To shape a positive image of the state on the global stage, it is necessary to use a variety of mechanisms (Table 2), including cultural diplomacy to promote national culture, art, and traditions through international events, which helps improve the perception of the country at the global level; economic cooperation to inform about investment opportunities, economic achievements, and innovative projects, which enhances the country's attractiveness as a partner; participation in international organizations such as the UN, OSCE, or WHO, which demonstrates the state's commitment to promoting peace and cooperation; digital diplomacy, which allows countries to address a global audience, creating a distinct national brand.

There are numerous successful examples of how international communications influence the formation of a positive state image. For instance, Norway actively supports peacekeeping processes, which helps establish its reputation as a reliable partner in resolving international conflicts; Japan employs cultural diplomacy by popularizing its culture, such as Japanese cuisine, animation, and traditional art. An example of Poland's effective strategy in building a positive image on the

international stage is its public diplomacy and cultural influence strategy. This includes the 'International Cultural Brand of Poland' program, the promotion of historical heritage, and tourism. Poland strives to be perceived as a country with a dynamically growing economy by attracting foreign investments and promoting Polish brands (for example, companies in the IT sector, furniture manufacturing, and agriculture). All these efforts collectively create a positive and stable image of Poland as a country with a rich culture, democratic values, and economic potential.

Successful cases demonstrate how effective diplomatic initiatives, cultural diplomacy, sporting events, and technological breakthroughs can significantly improve a country's perception in the world. For example, the 'Scandinavian Miracle': the international image of Sweden and Norway. These countries actively use international communications to promote their brands as advanced, socially oriented states, where public diplomacy includes active promotion of policies on equality, human rights, and environmental responsibility, and cultural diplomacy encompasses the export of music (ABBA, Avicii), cinema (Swedish noir), design, and fashion. Another positive example of shaping a state's image on the global stage is the London Olympics of 2012, which became a model example of using an international event to enhance the image of the United Kingdom.

Successful international communications can radically change the perception of a state, making it recognizable, innovative, and culturally attractive. Key factors for success include the strategic use of culture, technology, sports, and diplomacy to build a long-term positive image on the international stage.

Table 2. Mechanisms of International Communications in Shaping a Positive State Image

Category	Examples of Mechanisms	Goals
Diplomatic Mechanisms	Bilateral negotiations	Participating in international organizations
Public Diplomacy	Support for international cooperation	Strengthening trust in the state Lobbying for national interests
Cultural Diplomacy	Hosting cultural events abroad	Creating an attractive cultural image of the state
Economic Diplomacy	Organizing international economic forums	Enhancing the country's economic reputation
Media and Communications	Attracting investment through presentations and exhibitions	Shaping a modern image in the digital space
Science Diplomacy	Utilizing social media and digital platforms	Building trust through scientific cooperation
Humanitarian Aid	Organizing international scientific events	Projecting the image of a responsible state
Sports Diplomacy	Participating in international humanitarian projects	Strengthening positive perception of the state through sports
Tourism Appeal	Participation of national teams in world championships	Creating a positive image of a tourist-friendly country

Source: author's development

Trust-building is one of the central elements in shaping a positive image of the state both domestically and internationally. Trust becomes the foundation of stability, interaction, and development, influencing all aspects of society, including the economy, politics, culture, and foreign policy. According to A. Kavyerina (2017)¹, there is a need to develop a comprehensive concept of trust. Key aspects of trust-building include government transparency, as transparent and accountable actions strengthen citizens' trust in institutions. Regular communication, publication of results, access to information, and effective anti-corruption measures create a sense of fairness and stability.

The state's ability to ensure stability, respond effectively to challenges, and guarantee citizens' rights fosters a sense of confidence. Ensuring the rule of law, a non-discriminatory approach to citizens, and the protection of human rights are essential factors in building trust, especially among the international community. Investors are more likely to invest in countries where they trust political and economic stability, and states that have earned the trust of their citizens and the international community are more often seen as reliable partners in diplomatic and trade relations.

Challenges in building trust include unstable political situations or corruption scandals that can undermine trust. Fake news and information attacks create a false image of the state as unreliable or unstable. Violations of international agreements or human rights also negatively affect the state's image globally. Trust-building is a strategic task for the state, requiring a systematic approach, coordinated work of public institutions, and openness in relations with citizens and the international community. In our opinion, trust is the foundation on which both internal stability and the state's positive image in the world are built.

The integration of the global community is a key element of modern international communication, contributing to the formation of a positive state image. According to A. Girman (2022)², each model of international integration has its own dynamics that deserve special consideration. Thanks to the development of digital technologies, intercultural dialogue has become more accessible, allowing countries to actively present their achievements, cultural heritage, and economic opportunities. Participation in international projects, forums, and global initiatives provides states with a platform to showcase their development strategies and strengthen cooperation. Thus, integration enhances the country's international reputation, strengthens its influence on the world stage, and attracts new partners.

International communication is also an important tool for state branding. Through the effective presentation of key aspects of its development, a state can create a unique image that attracts foreign investors, tourists, and talents. For example, successful diplomacy, cultural exchanges, and media campaigns help change stereotypes and shape a modern perception of the country. All this not only contributes to the

¹ Kavyerina A. S. (2017). Trust in convergent media in Ukraine. *Scientific qualification thesis on the rights of manuscript. Kharkiv National University named after V. N. Karazin*. Kharkiv. 187 p. [in Ukrainian]. URL: <http://dissertations.karazin.ua/sociology/resources/584be0d7c6363ccab8f3f958437c3233.pdf>

² Girman A. P. (2022). Integration in international relations. *Regional studies*, 28, 63–66 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <http://www.regionalstudies.uzhnu.uz.ua/archive/28/11.pdf>

improvement of economic and cultural development but also strengthens the state's position in the global arena as a reliable and promising partner.

Global challenges require joint efforts and rapid response. International communication enables the coordination of actions by various countries and international organizations, the formation of collective decisions, and the implementation of effective strategies. Table 3 demonstrates how various global challenges influence the formation of a positive state image. Overcoming them requires strategic approaches, including the development of international communications, digital diplomacy, cooperation with media and civil society.

Table 3. Global Challenges of International Communications in Shaping a Positive State Image

Call category	Challenge Description	Examples
Political challenges	Political instability, internal conflicts, changes in government, insufficient transparency of the government, complicating communication with international partners	Corruption in power, political crises, conflicts within the country
Economic challenges	Low level of economic development, economic crises, insufficient investment attractiveness	High inflation rate, lack of foreign investments, economic dependence on external markets
Cultural and social challenges	Misunderstanding due to cultural differences, insufficient knowledge about the state at the international level, stereotypes about the nation	Negative stereotypes about the country in international media, lack of promotion of cultural heritage on the global stage
Informational challenges	Spread of misinformation, fake news, cyberattacks, that affect the perception of the state	Propaganda against the country, cyberattacks, manipulation on social media
Geopolitical challenges	Competition between states, shifting global alliances, conflicts of interest in international relations	Sanctions imposed by other countries, involvement in conflicts, geopolitical isolation
Environmental challenges	Criticism due to environmental problems, lack of a sustainable development strategy, ecological disasters	Environmental pollution, climate change, failure to meet international environmental commitments
Technological challenges	Lack of innovative infrastructure, slow digitization, lagging in the development of modern technologies	Low level of digital technology implementation, lack of competitive startups on the global stage
Communication challenges	Ineffective PR strategies, low quality of the country's representation in international media, weak interaction with the diaspora and foreign media	Absence of a national brand, underdeveloped international PR system, weak marketing of the country's tourism opportunities

Source: author's development

Numerous challenges limit the effectiveness of international communication. One of the key challenges in international communication is the language barrier and cultural differences, which can distort the transmission of information or lead to misinterpretations. A. Orel et al. (2022)¹ argue that communication barriers can significantly impact the achievement of the interlocutors' goals. Polish researcher E. Sławkowa (2006)² states that "an interaction, in which participants belong to different linguistic, racial, religious, and civilizational cultural circles, although conducted in one language, is characterized by a variety of conversational skills. It is marked by ethnic ways of using language that lead to misunderstandings and ambiguities, which neither party to the dialogue had foreseen". Each country has unique cultural codes, traditions, and communication styles that can differ significantly. For example, symbols or expressions that are acceptable in one culture may carry negative connotations in another, complicating the transmission of key messages and the creation of a positive state image. Failing to consider these nuances in a communication strategy can lead to misunderstandings, loss of trust, or even deterioration of relations with the international community.

A significant challenge is informational asymmetry and competition in the global information space. In today's world, dominated by digital technologies and social networks, states face a constant struggle for audience attention. The coverage of events depends on media resources, which may present a biased portrayal of a given country. Furthermore, competing states often engage in information warfare or disinformation campaigns to influence the image of other countries. In such an information climate, it becomes difficult for states to achieve objective and positive perceptions in the international community.

Information wars and disinformation campaigns have become powerful tools for influencing a state's international reputation. Through manipulative messages, fake news, and propaganda narratives, certain countries can deliberately distort facts, creating a negative image of their geopolitical opponents. This is used to undermine trust in governments, create internal instability, and reduce support from the global community.

Disinformation campaigns often target the undermining of trust in official sources of information and the spreading of panic or division among citizens. Using social networks, bots, and algorithms, such campaigns can quickly gain popularity and create the illusion of mass support for certain ideas. This is particularly dangerous during crises when public opinion is vulnerable to manipulation, potentially influencing international sanctions, diplomatic relations, or economic cooperation.

In the long term, constant informational pressure can form persistent stereotypes about a country under attack, leading to economic isolation, a decline in tourist appeal, and a loss of investment. In response, states are compelled to develop information

¹ Orel A., Zhmailov V. (2022). Practical aspects of communicative barriers in modern society. *Economy and society*, 45 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://economyandsociety.in.ua/index.php/journal/article/view/2109>

² Sławkowa E. (2006). Conversational styles in the perspective of intercultural communication. *Conversational styles* / Ed. B. Witosz. Katowice. S. 71 [in Polish].

security strategies, increase media literacy among their populations, and create their own narratives to counter disinformation.

The effectiveness of international communications also depends on the personal image of the individual responsible, which creates a certain level of trust or distrust towards its bearer, aiming to exert an emotional-psychological influence on the audience. O. Fedorenko et al. (2024)¹ note that a country's leader, particularly the President, must embody an organic image that distinguishes him from other politicians, showcases his individuality, and inspires trust in him, and, consequently, in the information he transmits. The President of any state is the image of the country, its "business card". During the Russo-Ukrainian War, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy plays a crucial role in executing Ukraine's strategic communications both internally and on the international stage. Practically every day, the President communicates with world leaders during meetings, phone calls, via messengers, and video links, ensuring partners are informed about Ukraine's situation and needs, as well as maintaining these issues as priorities for world leaders. A key feature of President Zelenskyy's international communications is the clear practical direction of his foreign visits, focused on specific results.

Experts from the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House (2023)², presented the research "Seven Ways Russia's War Against Ukraine Has Changed the World", analyzing shifts in geopolitical alliances, security and defense configurations, global energy perspectives, and changes in global supply chains. The report mentions President Zelenskyy: over the year of this war, he is perceived as the embodiment of "unity and defiance", the "respected face of European liberal democracy", and a wartime leader akin to Winston Churchill ("Churchillian" wartime leader).

Chatham House's (2023) research "Seven Ways Russia's War Against Ukraine Has Changed the World" has played a significant role in shaping Ukraine's international image, emphasizing the resilience of Ukrainian society and the country's ability to resist aggression, which helps strengthen Ukraine's positive perception on the global stage. The report also highlights the importance of the full de-occupation of Ukrainian territories and the provision of reliable security guarantees to the country. This underscores Ukraine's desire to restore its territorial integrity and sovereignty, positively influencing its international image as a country defending its rights and international norms. Additionally, the study examines the impact of the war on global security structures and Ukraine's role in strengthening European security. This contributes to recognizing Ukraine as an important partner in ensuring stability in the region, which is positively reflected in its international image.

¹ Fedorenko O. D., Kovtun N. O. (2024). Transformation of external image of the President of Ukraine V. Zelenskyy in the conditions of a full-scale invasion. *Academic notes of Vernadskyi TNU. Series: Philology. Journalism*, 35 (74), № 2, part 2, 270–275 [in Ukrainian]. URL: https://philol.vernadskyjournals.in.ua/journals/2024/2_2024/part_2/45.pdf

² Chatham House (2023). The Royal Institute of International Affairs. Seven ways Russia's war on Ukraine has changed the world. Chatham House. 20 February, 2023. URL: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2023/02/seven-ways-russias-war-ukraine-has...>

Ukraine aims to end the full-scale war primarily through diplomatic settlement, but the only acceptable resolution for the Ukrainian people remains a lasting and just peace based on respect for international law. Therefore, the President of Ukraine proposed the diplomatic platform “Peace Formula”, aimed at restoring Ukraine’s territorial integrity and achieving a comprehensive global peace. The Ukrainian diplomatic platform, the Peace Formula, is a clear example of how international communications influence a state’s image. To promote the Peace Formula, the President of Ukraine has conducted a series of discussions in various formats with the participation of as many countries as possible. During 2023–2024, such events took place in Denmark, Saudi Arabia, Malta, and Switzerland. One of the outcomes of these meetings was the organization of working groups for each point of the Peace Formula. An inaugural Global Peace Summit was also organized on June 15–16, 2024, where leaders of countries discussed the positions outlined in the Peace Formula. The advantage of the Peace Formula lies in its coverage of global issues and its ability to engage a broad circle of allies.

The Peace Formula presented by President Zelenskyy plays a key role in forming Ukraine’s international image as a responsible and peace-loving player on the world stage, as it emphasizes the country’s desire for a just and lasting peace based on international law. By offering a concrete ten-point plan, Ukraine demonstrates initiative in addressing the global conflict, strengthening its authority among partners. Beyond the diplomatic aspect, the Peace Formula also contributes to consolidating international support for Ukraine. Actively promoting this plan across various international platforms attracts new allies and enhances both political and military-economic assistance. It also creates an image of Ukraine as a country not only fighting for its independence but also offering real solutions for global security.

Ultimately, President Zelenskyy’s Peace Formula positively influences how Ukraine is perceived worldwide, positioning it as a state striving for stability and prosperity. Thanks to this initiative, Ukraine appears not only as a victim of aggression but as a country setting new standards in international relations. This strengthens trust in the country among investors, diplomats, and the global community, marking an important step in its post-war recovery and development.

The exchange of information plays a central role in international communications, as it allows countries to interact effectively, share experiences, and solve common problems. Thanks to modern technologies, the transmission of information has become instantaneous, fostering open dialogue between states, international organizations, and the public. Such exchanges help establish diplomatic relations, ensure security, and promote economic development.

International communications also influence the formation of a country’s image on the world stage, as they enable the country to present itself as a reliable partner that adheres to international norms and values. States use diplomacy, cultural initiatives, media, and social networks to promote their achievements, innovations, and traditions. A positive image fosters foreign investment, tourism development, and increased trust within the international community.

Effective communication allows a country not only to defend its interests but also to develop cooperation in various areas, from science and education to trade and security. It helps to break down stereotypes and prejudices, promoting mutual understanding between nations. In the context of globalization, successful international communications are the key to stability, peace, and development, as they contribute to the establishment of long-term partnerships between countries.

Thus, international communications today serve as the leading driver of foreign policy and play a crucial role in shaping a country's image in the international community. Through the exchange of information, international communications help maintain a positive state image by conveying favorable messages about its achievements, culture, business opportunities, and other positive aspects.

Conclusions

International communications are a powerful tool that influences the development of intergovernmental relations, the formation of public opinion, the building of trust between nations, and plays a key role in shaping a country's image in the context of globalization. They facilitate interaction with other countries, advancing national interests, identity, and values on the global stage. Through effective public diplomacy, cultural exchange, and media campaigns, states can create a positive impression of themselves and attract international support. Effective international communications, based on transparency, openness, and cultural interaction, are essential for a country's successful integration into the global community and its competitiveness in the global environment.

An important component of modern international communications is digital platforms, which enable quick responses to challenges, the dissemination of reliable information, and the engagement of broad audiences. At the same time, states face the challenge of disinformation, which requires a clear communication strategy and collaboration with international organizations to counter media manipulation. The effective use of international communications helps prevent conflicts, promote peace and stability, and create a positive national image. The integration of civil society in shaping foreign policy promotes the dissemination of positive narratives about the country.

An essential role in this is also played by interactions with international organizations, as well as the development of cultural, scientific, and sports projects that serve as platforms for dialogue and the exchange of experiences. A positive national image is a key factor in a country's international reputation and development. To achieve this goal, countries employ a range of measures, including cultural diplomacy, economic cooperation, international initiatives, and raising awareness of unique aspects of national identity.

Transparency in domestic and foreign policies, adherence to democratic principles, and human rights are crucial factors in fostering trust among the international community. A successful national image helps attract investments, maintain strategic partnerships, and strengthen a country's position in global political and economic processes. At the same time, a positive national image requires a systematic approach

and a long-term strategy that considers contemporary challenges and the dynamics of the international environment.

Recommendations

To enhance international communications, it is crucial to develop a clear public diplomacy strategy that considers national interests, target audiences, and current trends in the information space. Such a strategy should include an active presence on global platforms, the use of digital technologies to disseminate content, and the adaptation of messages to the cultural peculiarities of other countries. Raising the international community's awareness of the country's history, culture, and current achievements will contribute to shaping a positive perception and strengthening trust in the nation.

To improve the country's image, it is important to support intercultural exchange through educational programs, cultural events, and joint international initiatives. Involving experts, media representatives, scientists, and business figures in international dialogue will contribute to expanding influence networks and exchanging ideas. Furthermore, emphasizing cooperation in addressing global challenges such as climate change, humanitarian crises, or technological development will present the state as a responsible and reliable partner within the international community.

Successful international communication should be based on a strategic approach, integrating political, economic, and cultural aspects to create a sustainable and positive national image.

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1.2. Shaping a Positive Image of Ukraine through Gender-Balanced Media Content

Olena Balalaieva

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine
03041, 15 Heroyiv Oborony Str., Kyiv, Ukraine
URL: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2675-5554>

Abstract

The media is one of the most powerful means of shaping the state’s image. Trends in Ukraine’s perception in the world, its reputation in the Global Soft Power Index, and the loss of points in the assessment of such important indicators as media and sustainable development make the study of this problem extremely relevant. One of the strategic sustainable development goals is gender equality. In the context of Ukraine’s European integration commitments, the issues of gender balance in media as a reflection of an acute social problem are gaining urgency and require the study of new aspects in the conditions of a full-scale war. Due to the military actions on the territory of Ukraine that limits direct contacts media discourse is becoming extremely important in shaping the image of our country and its perception in the world. The purpose of the study is to analyse gender balance in Ukrainian media content and its role in shaping Ukraine’s positive image. The research methodology is based on UNESCO framework of gender-sensitive indicators for media. This study focused on two strategic objectives: 1) balanced presence of women and men – reflecting the composition of society, and human experiences, actions, views, and concerns, in media coverage of news; 2) fair portrayal of women and men through elimination of stereotypes and promotion of multidimensional representation.

The material for the research is data of two independent Ukrainian national and regional media monitoring studies. The research findings show an imbalance in Ukrainian media content in favour of men. Despite the existing imbalance, especially in such topics as politics, economics, war, we note the positive changes regarding the destruction of gender stereotypes and transformation of gender roles in Ukrainian society, reflected in changing representations of women in modern media. We can state that a new woman image – a female citizen of Ukraine – appeared in the media. It is not equal to the sum of stereotypes but is a new integrated image, the key element in the construction of which is national identity. A woman appears as a citizen of a democratic society, a conscious and active voice of national interests and national spirit, who along with men contributes to the common cause, expresses readiness and will to achieve the national goal. According to sociological research, such brand attributes as “democratic country” and “member of the European family” are some of the most popular and promising in shaping a positive image of Ukraine. Promoting gender balance is not only an ethical value but also a strategic necessity: gender equality is a key driver of economic and social stability, part of Ukraine’s European integration obligations.

Keywords: state’s image, media, gender balance, content, representation, male and female experts.

Introduction

In 2025, Ukraine ranks 46th in the Global Soft Power Index of 193 member states of the United Nations, dropping two positions compared to last year. This Index evaluates Soft Power through Key Performance Indicators: *Familiarity* – how well a nation is known, *Reputation* – how positively a nation is regarded and *Influence* – how much a nation is perceived to influence other nations. Equally important are perceptions of the nation brand across key areas where Soft Power is developed and exercised – Eight Soft Power pillars: Business & Trade, International Relations, Education & Science, Culture & Heritage, Governance, Media & Communication, Sustainable Future, People & Values.

Three years on, perceptions of Ukraine’s Soft Power have weakened, with “*Reputation*” plummeting 19 places to 95th – below Russia’s 75th – highlighting divided global views on the war. “*Governance*” has also declined, down 17 places to 77th, and “*Familiarity*” fell four spots to 20th, underscoring the difficulty of sustaining international attention and sympathy (Brand Finance, 2025)¹.

This is a serious signal for consolidating society’s efforts in shaping a positive image of Ukraine.

As Maria Lyapitska emphasizes, “The emotional halo that significantly strengthened our country’s image and reputation at the beginning of the full-scale invasion is gradually fading. We now face an extremely important task: rather than relying on emotional assessments and unconditional support, we must work towards fostering a deeper understanding of Ukraine and what our country can offer the world. Accordingly, one of the key priorities for all stakeholders in strategic communications is to promote knowledge about Ukraine, its potential, and its specific achievements” (Brand Ukraine, 2024)².

¹ Brand Finance (2025). Global Soft Power Index 2025. URL: <https://brandfinance.com/insights/global-soft-power-index-2025-the-shifting-balance-of-global-soft-power>

² Brand Ukraine (2024). Ukraine’s global perception report 2024. URL: <https://brandukraine.org.ua/en/analytics/ukraines-global-perception-report-2024/>

In 2025, among other important indicators, Ukraine lost 0.1 points each in the assessment of such Soft Power pillar as Media & Communication (3,5).

At the same time, the Global Soft Power Index experts have conducted additional analysis using the UN Sustainable Development Goals Index to quantify the divergence between sustainability perceptions and performance. The analysis highlights that many nations are not currently receiving the recognition and Soft Power benefits that they deserve based on their progress against the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite the difficulties, Ukraine together with Finland, Cuba, Croatia, Latvia, Slovenia and Jamaica, demonstrated better results in implementing the UN SDGs than is perceived globally. As analysts note: “These nations are making strides towards the ideals of the UN SDGs, particularly in social equality, educational attainment, environmental protection, and economic growth, relative to their levels of consumption. Effectively communicating a strong sustainability position presents a significant opportunity to enhance and leverage Soft Power” (Brand Finance, 2025)³.

Therefore, this opens up additional opportunities for strengthening Ukraine’s soft power through achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

As is well known, one of the strategic sustainable development goals is gender equality. UN experts emphasize that equal representation is a goal and a conduit for more just, peaceful societies yet has not been attained. Gender equality means “equal visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation of women and men in all spheres of public and private life”⁴. In today’s world, as V. Shynkaruk (2024)⁵ notes, the process of developing democracy and ensuring the principle of gender equality has a two-way relationship: first, democracy is an effective mechanism for achieving gender equality, and second, the principle of gender equality is the basis for the development of democracy.

Close to this concept is gender balance, which means “an equitable distribution of life’s opportunities and resources between women and men, and/or the equal representation of women and men”⁶.

The Global Gender Gap Index annually benchmarks the current state and evolution of gender parity across four key dimensions (Economic Participation & Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health & Survival, Political Empowerment). The lack of meaningful, widespread change since the last edition effectively slows down the rate of progress to attain parity. Based on current data, it will take 134 years to reach full parity – roughly five generations beyond the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal

³ Brand Finance (2025). Global Soft Power Index 2025. URL: <https://brandfinance.com/insights/global-soft-power-index-2025-the-shifting-balance-of-global-soft-power>

⁴ Council of Europe (2015). Equality between Women and Men. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/168064f51b>

⁵ Shynkaruk V. (2024). Ensuring the principle of gender equality in the context of Ukraine’s European strategy. *Development of women’s leadership potential in the academic environment: International experience for Ukraine’s development needs* : proceeding of the international scient. and pract. conference, Kyiv, Ukraine, P. 4 [in Ukrainian]. URL: https://nubip.edu.ua/sites/default/files/u368/zbirnik_rozvitok_liderskogo_potencialu_zhinok_v_akademichnomu_seredovishchi.pdf

⁶ Gender Balance Guide. Actions for UAE Organisations (2017). Paris, OECD Publishing. URL: https://www.gbc.gov.ae/assets/uploads/gbc_gender_guide_en_2019.pdf

target. In 2024, Ukraine ranked 63rd out of 146 countries in this index, increasing its rank by three positions compared to previous year¹.

However, the recent report “Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2024” finds that “the world is still falling short on its commitments to women and girls”²; it shows that despite some progress (declining poverty, narrowing of gender gaps in education and a push for positive legal reforms), the pace is too slow, and there is a very high cost of not realizing women’s rights. WACC Gender and Communications Program Manager Sarah Macharia accented on the need to re-strategize moving into GMMP 2025. Looking ahead to the next GMMP in 2025, the project’s global coordinator emphasized the need to “work smarter” and grow new partnerships connecting across academia, civil society, and the media industry (WACC, 2023)³.

Studying the problem of gender and media has a strong scientific tradition. At the same time, current epistemological and ontological approaches, theoretical and practical developments, based on the latest data of the Global Media Monitoring Project, challenge established concepts, rethinking the postulates of media production, content and consumption, the sex/gender dichotomy, in particular, in the works K. Ross, I. Bachmann, V. Cardo, S. Murti, K. M. Scarcelli, B. Cassa, C. Knowles, S. Macharia, H. Vandenberghe.

In Ukraine, the theoretical and practical aspects of the problems of gender in media are highlighted in the works of A. Volobueva, I. Volovenko, Yu. Gonchar, I. Kiyanka, O. Khromeychuk, S. Kushnir, S. Kotova-Oliynyk, M. Mayerchuk, T. Martsenyuk, N. Sydorenko, T. Starchenko, O. Panchenko, O. Plahotnik, V. Suprun, Yu. Shturkhetsky, and others. However, the gender problem in the Ukrainian media remains relevant (Balalaieva, 2019)⁴ and requires the study of new aspects – historical, sociopolitical, philosophical and many others – in the conditions of a full-scale war. Due to the military actions on the territory of Ukraine that limits direct contacts, media discourse is becoming extremely important in shaping the image of our country and its perception in the world.

Trends in Ukraine’s perception in the world, its declining reputation the Global Soft Power Index, and the loss of points in the assessment of such important indicators as media and sustainable development make the study of this problem extremely relevant.

¹ Global Gender Gap Report (2024). *World Economic Forum*. URL: <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2024/>

² Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2024. (2024). URL: <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2024-en.pdf>

³ WACC (2023). Call to re-strategize for GMMP 2025 to tackle new challenges of gender equality in the media. URL: <https://waccglobal.org/call-to-re-strategize-for-gmmp-2025-to-tackle-new-challenges-of-gender-equality-in-the-media/>

⁴ Balalaieva O. (2019). The problem of gender balance in Ukrainian media: outlines of a solution, *Euromentor*; X (3), 79–92. URL: <https://euromentor.ucdc.ro/en/Euromentor%2029%20septembrie%202019.pdf>

The purpose of the study is to analyse gender balance in Ukrainian media content and its role in shaping Ukraine's positive image.

Materials and Methods

Gender equality in the media can be considered at two levels: equality within media companies (equal opportunities and treatment, access to leadership positions, pay equality etc.) and equality in media content (maintaining a gender balance, avoiding spreading gender stereotypes and sexism).

UNESCO (2012)⁵ has elaborated a global framework of Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media to enable effective assessment or diagnosis of both levels. In this study, we will focus on the media content level and two strategic objectives with recommended indicators, selected for our research.

Objective 1: Balanced presence of women and men – reflecting the composition of society, and human experiences, actions, views, and concerns, in media coverage of news and current affairs.

For this objective, UNESCO experts developed indicators, based on proportions of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs content over a random selection of one week at whole; directly interviewed/quoted in news and current affairs content as sources of information and/or opinion; appearing as: spokespersons, experts, citizens/civil society representatives; as well as proportions of women and men seen, heard or read about and/or interviewed/quoted as sources of information/opinion in news and current affairs content differentiated according to thematic areas such as:

- 1) Politics & Government.
- 2) Economics & Business.
- 3) War & Conflict.
- 4) Science & Technology.
- 5) Sports.
- 6) Other.

Objective 2: Fair portrayal of women and men through elimination of stereotypes and promotion of multidimensional representation/portrayal.

For this objective, such indicators have been developed: proportions of stories with stereotypes (openly sexist interpretations of the characteristics and roles of women and men in society; depiction of traditional “feminine”/“masculine” characteristics and male/female roles, thereby making them appear normal and inevitable while excluding other possible traits and functions for men and women in society; proportions of women to men portrayed as victims (e.g., of crime, violence/atrocity, conflict, disaster, poverty, etc.) and as survivors; proportion of feminine noun forms used to refer to a profession, position, or type of occupation when speaking about women.

⁵ UNESCO (2012). Gender-sensitive indicators for media: framework of indicators to gauge gender sensitivity in media operations and content, 41–42. URL: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000217831>

Usually, gender analysis is conducted based on qualitative information and methods and/or based on quantitative information provided by gender statistics. As one of the main means of verification, UNESCO recommends monitoring and sex-disaggregated analysis of news and current affairs content¹.

For comparative analysis, we use the data of two monitoring studies:

1) Monitoring of gender balance in national online media, conducted by the Institute of Mass Information (2024–2025)^{2, 3};

2) Monitoring of gender balance in regional online media, conducted by the Volyn Press Club in partnership with other media organizations (2025)^{4, 5}.

The paper focuses more on the problem of women's representation in media content.

Results and Discussion

The media is one of the most powerful means of shaping the state's image. As Anholt (2009)⁶ aptly puts it, the media is “one of the main conduits through which national image usually travels”.

Almakaty (2025, p. 132)⁷ emphasizes, “In an era of rapid globalization and technology, media is increasingly vital, as soft power, which includes culture, political values, and foreign policies, plays a key role in establishing a nation's identity and influence... Effective communication strategies allow countries to shape their international images and influence their perceptions. Soft power, through cultural storytelling and public opinion, helps build a positive national image and attracts allies, contrasting traditional hard power tactics that often provoke resistance”.

Analyzing the modern challenges facing media as one of the eight pillars of Soft Power, analyst M. Mukherjee states, that “Media must focus on producing relevant, engaging, and high-quality content that demonstrates the value of engaging with the news for audiences across class, culture, religion and gender. As an extension, it is

¹ UNESCO (2012). Gender-sensitive indicators for media: framework of indicators to gauge gender sensitivity in media operations and content, 41–42. URL: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000217831>

² Institute of Mass Information (2024). Ten years of imbalance. How war affects the representation of women in the media [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://imi.org.ua/monitorings/desyat-rokiv-dysbalansu-yak-vijna-vplyvaye-na-predstavlenist-zhinok-v-media-i59764>

³ Institute of Mass Information (2025). Three years of stagnation. How the Ukrainian media maintain gender imbalance – IMI research [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://imi.org.ua/monitorings/try-roky-stagnatsiyi-yak-ukrayinski-media-zberigayut-gendernyj-dysbalans-doslidzhennya-imi-i67060>

⁴ Volyn Press Club (2024). [50%] Index of gender sensitivity of hyperlocal media in February 2024, (2024). Volyn Press Club [in Ukrainian]. URL: http://volynpressclub.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1233:50-2024-&catid=10:gendermedia&Itemid=21_2023-cgp_ukr_v5.pdf

⁵ Volyn Press Club (2025). More feminatives, but few women: results of monitoring the content of regional media in January 2025 [in Ukrainian]. URL: http://volynpressclub.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1272:-2025-&catid=10:gendermedia&Itemid=21

⁶ Anholt S. (2009). The media and national image. *Place Brand Public Diplomacy*, 5, 169–179. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1057/pb.2009.11>

⁷ Almakaty S. S. (2025). Communication and soft power: Exploring the role of international media in building national image. *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology*, 9 (2), 132–143. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55214/25768484.v9i2.4439>

vital that news reaches those who feel the most alienated by it: young people, ethnic minorities, socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, women” (Global Soft Power Index, 2025)⁸.

As it says in the MCIP guidelines, “the media can both obstruct and accelerate structural changes aimed at achieving gender equality. This inequality becomes even more pronounced when it comes to the presence of women in media content, both in terms of quality and quantity” (Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, 2023)⁹.

It is on the principles of gender balance in journalistic materials, the inadmissibility of discrimination and sexism that democratic mass media around the world should work. But behind the results of the latest Global Media Monitoring Project, which is carried out every five years (the most recent edition took place in 2020)¹⁰ based on the News Media Gender Equality Index, despite some progress on some indicators, the “invisibility” of women as subjects and sources in the news still remains the norm.

The result of women’s underrepresentation is an unbalanced picture of the world in which women are largely absent. A monitoring study found a lack of female voices in news journalism, resulting in content that reflects a male-focused worldview.

Let’s compare the data of two independent monitoring of Ukrainian national and hyperlocal online media conducted by different organisations in the same time period – the first quarter of 2024.

Regular monitoring of the gender balance in the media is carried out by several organizations, including the Institute of Mass Information (IMI), which investigates the problem at the level of national online media. After ten years of systematic monitoring of the gender balance, IMI researchers state that the visibility of women in the media has always resonated with events in the country.

The presence of women in media increased every year until 2022, but the full-scale invasion set back the progress of women’s visibility in the content by several years (at least five years in terms of the visibility of female experts, and by a full decade in terms of women as subjects.). This is evidenced by the results of the last monitoring conducted in the first quarter of 2024¹¹.

IMI studied the content of 10 national online media, among which: *TSN, Ukrainska Pravda, RBC-Ukraine, Korrespondent, UNIAN, Censor, Suspilne, 24 Channel, etc.*

The results of monitoring confirm, that the number of female experts continues to decrease: if in 2021 women gave comments for 30 % of all cases, then after the

⁸ Global Soft Power Index (2025). URL: <https://static.brandirectory.com/reports/brand-finance-soft-power-index-2025-digital.pdf>

⁹ Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine (2023). Guidelines on Media Coverage of Gender Equality; Prevention of Violence, Sexism, and Gender Stereotypes. URL: https://cje.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/E-ENG-METODYCHNI-REKOMENDATSIYI_MKIP.pdf

¹⁰ 6th Global Media Monitoring Project Report. GMPP 2020-2021 Final Report. (2021). URL: <https://whomakesthenews.org/gmpp-2020-final-reports/>

¹¹ Institute of Mass Information (2024). Ten years of imbalance. How war affects the representation of women in the media [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://imi.org.ua/monitorings/desyat-rokiv-dysbalansu-yak-vijna-vplyvaye-na-predstavlenist-zhinok-v-media-i59764>

invasion this number decreases by about 5%, and is currently (in the first quarter of 2024) only 17%.

According to the IMI research, women most often commented on international affairs (36.8%), criminal chronicles and accidents (11.5%), war and economy (9.2% each), health (5.7%) (Table 1).

Every third expert comment by a woman was on international issues. During the monitoring period, there were mostly expert opinions of foreign politicians who commented on topics related to support for Ukraine.

Table 1. Presence of female experts and heroines in Ukrainian national media in the first quarter of 2024 (%)

Thematic area	Female experts	Female heroines
International issues	36,8	11,3
Criminal chronicles	11,5	18
War	9,2	16
Economics	9,2	
Health	5,7	
Politics	27,6	
Society		8,8
Sports		39,2
Show business		22,5
Average presence rate	17	

Source: compiled by the author based on IMI monitoring data¹

Traditionally, women have had a high rate of involvement in criminal news: female spokespersons and press officers were the most commonly cited.

Women also commented on the economy and business (9.2%).

The same percentage of female experts (9.2%) was fixed in publications related to the war. The main female spokesperson on the topic of the war was the head of the Joint Press Centre for Operational Command Pivden Nataliya Humenyuk, who provided official information about the course of hostilities. There were also sporadic cases when female experts commented on the topics of society, politics, weather and sports.

In another 5.7% of all stories, women commented on health issues.

Other publications in which women gave expert opinions accounted for 27.6% without differentiation by topic.

The presence of women as heroines in online media is 22.5% (men – 77.5%). During the monitoring period, women were most often mentioned in materials about show business (39.2%), criminal chronicles (18%), international affairs (11.3%), sports (8.8%), society (6.7%). Women also appeared as heroines in materials about war, politics and life stories, but quite rarely.

¹ Institute of Mass Information (2024). Ten years of imbalance. How war affects the representation of women in the media [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://imi.org.ua/monitorings/desyat-rokiv-dysbalansu-yak-vijna-vplyvaye-na-predstavlenist-zhinok-v-media-i59764>.

Let us compare the data of the monitoring conducted according to the same methodology by IMI first quarter of 2025² and covered 1,000 materials in the same ten national online media.

According to the monitoring results, in 2025, women appeared as experts in 21 % of materials, and as heroines in 16.5 %. These are significantly lower figures than in 2021 (before the full-scale invasion), when female experts appeared in 30 % of materials.

Women most often commented on international issues (38.8 %). The majority of expert opinions were voiced by foreign female politicians who commented on topics related to support for Ukraine: international aid to Ukraine, the deployment of foreign peacekeepers in Ukraine, peace agreements, the possibility of negotiations between Ukraine and the Russians., etc.

In addition to foreign female politicians, there were comments from the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration – Minister of Justice O. Stefanishyna, who commented on topics related to the signing of the agreement with the US on minerals deals and comments on Ukraine's EU membership negotiations.

As IMI analysts note, despite the fact that female experts most often comment on international issues, their presence in coverage of the economics, security, military affairs, and criminal chronicles remains marginally low.

On the topic of economics, during the monitoring period, the media most often published expert comments by the First Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine – Minister of Economy of Ukraine Yu. Svyrydenko, who commented on the topic of Ukrainians spending “Zelensky's thousands”, as well as the effective use of state programs for business development.

There were occasional comments by the Minister of Social Policy, Oksana Zholnovych, on the allocation of subsidies for Ukrainians, comments by realtors on the Ukrainian real estate market, and business representatives.

In third place in terms of the number of mentions of women as experts was the topic of health (6.8 %). Most often, these were comments about healthy eating and recommendations on how to avoid vitamin deficiency in the winter.

Another 5.8 % of materials that mentioned a woman as an expert were about the weather, 4.9 % of materials were about criminal chronicles.

The presence of women as heroines in online media is 16.5 % (men – 84.5 %). During the monitoring period, women were most often mentioned in stories about show business (31.5 % of all materials with heroines), criminal chronicles (24.8 %), society (10.7 %), international topics (9.4 %), war (6 %).

Women as heroines were also featured in some stories about sports, education and human rights.

² Institute of Mass Information (2025). Three years of stagnation. How the Ukrainian media maintain gender imbalance – IMI research [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://imi.org.ua/monitorings/try-roky-stagnatsiyi-yak-ukrayinski-media-zberigayut-gendernyj-dysbalans-doslidzhennya-imi-i67060>

Mentions of women as heroines in crime stories occurred in every fourth article (24.8%). Most often, women in such articles were depicted as victims of road accidents, victims of fraudulent actions, victims of domestic or sexual violence. There were also cases when women broke the law: they collaborated with the occupiers, set fire to cars ordered by the Russians, or abused children.

Women were the heroines of publications about war and its consequences in only 6% of materials. Most often, these were women who were injured or died as a result of shelling by the Russian military of Ukrainian territories. Separate mentions also concerned women as relatives or close military personnel.

IMI analysts also recorded that due to the full-scale invasion, the number of mentions of servicemen in the Ukrainian media has decreased. The latest results of the IMI study indicate that the percentage of women as heroines and experts is only 3%, in contrast to male servicemen, who have 97% of mentions in the media. For example, even before the full-scale invasion, this figure was also negligible, but higher than now, and amounted to 5% of materials where there were mentions of female servicemen.

Stories about female soldiers, doctors, drone operators, officers, machine gunners, snipers and veterans are rare and the exception rather than the rule. TSN has the highest rate of presence of heroines (47%), but a high percentage of women's visibility does not always equate to information value (the stories mostly concern women in show business and have signs of sexism).

Among the positive changes, IMI analysts noted that Ukrainian media continue to systematically use feminatives.

The same challenges of gender balance are faced by hyperlocal media as national media. However, the data of regional media monitoring during the same period show a different picture both in terms of the quantitative ratio (proportions of women and men in stories) and their ratio differentiated according to thematic areas.

This is evidenced by the results of the monitoring of 229 Ukrainian printed and online media, conducted in February 2024 within the framework of the project "Gender-sensitive space of modern journalism", implemented by the Volyn Press Club¹ in partnership with other media organizations.

After analyzing 14,870 materials, the experts calculated the media gender sensitivity index, based on a balance of women and men as experts and heroes, and the number of feminine noun forms in media content.

The highest gender sensitivity index of was recorded in Ivano-Frankivsk media (56%), the second position was taken by Donetsk and Rivne media (55% each), and the third position was taken by Ternopil and Kherson media (54% each). The lowest gender sensitivity index was found in Zaporizhzhia (39%).

¹ Volyn Press Club (2024). [50%] Index of gender sensitivity of hyperlocal media in February 2024, (2024). Volyn Press Club [in Ukrainian]. URL: http://volynpressclub.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1233:50-2024-&catid=10:gendermedia&Itemid=21_2023-cgp_ukr_v5.pdf.

These results are significantly different from national media monitoring data. In particular, according to hyperlocal media monitoring data, an increase in the number of female experts was fixed: if in 2023 it was 30 % of all materials, in February 2024 – 39.5 %.

By regions, women most often commented on topics related to charity&volunteering (53 %), social policy (52 %), education & science and culture & religion (45 % each). Female expert opinion was heard the least in stories about war (22 %), sport (21 %), criminal chronicles (19 %). Most often, women were cited by Vinnytsia (51 %), Chernihiv (47 %) and Kharkiv (45 %) media, Zaporizhia involved the least number of female experts (22 %).

As heroines, women most often appeared in materials about education & science (51 %), charity & volunteering (45 %), and social issues (41 %); they were least represented in materials about war (15 %) and ecology (14 %) (Table 2).

By regions, Poltava media (41 %) Kyiv and Chernihiv (41 % each), published the most stories about women, the least – Zakarpattia (23 %), Zaporizhia (24 %) and Luhansk (28 %) media.

Table 2. Presence of female experts and heroines in Ukrainian hyperlocal media in the first quarter of 2024, (%)

Thematic area	Female experts	Female heroines
Charity & volunteering	53	45
Social policy	52	41
Education & science	45	51
Culture & religion	45	39
Medicine & health care	40	34
Ecology	36	14
Leisure	30	32
Economy & business	29	31
Politics	25	24
War	22	15
Sports	21	26
Criminal chronicles	19	21
Average presence rate	39,5	33,5

Source: compiled by the author based on VPC monitoring data²

Therefore, the last monitoring studies showed different results of gender balance in national and hyperlocal media. Thus, according to the research, in the first quarter of 2024, in national media, women were experts in 17 % of all materials, in regional media – in 39.5 %.

² Volyn Press Club (2024). [50%] Index of gender sensitivity of hyperlocal media in February 2024, (2024). Volyn Press Club [in Ukrainian]. URL: http://volynpressclub.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1233:50-2024-&catid=10:gendermedia&Itemid=21_2023-cgp_ukr_v5.pdf.

The data on the dynamics of these indicators also differ: in national media, it decreased by 6% compared to 2023, and in hyperlocal media, it increased by 9.5%. In national media, women most often commented on international affairs (36.8%), in hyperlocal media, on charity and volunteering (53%).

The results regarding the number of heroines in the materials also differ: 22.5% of national media and 33.5% of hyperlocal media wrote about women. According to analysts of the IMI, women were most often mentioned in materials about show business (39.2%). Researchers of hyperlocal media do not focus on this topic, fixing materials on education & science in the first place (51%).

It should be noted that the number of feminine noun forms in the materials of local media was quite high and amounted to 77.5%.

According to the same methodology Volyn Press Club conducted monitoring of Ukrainian regional media in January 2025¹.

By regions, women most often commented on topics related to social policy (44%), culture & religion (42%), medicine & health care (40%). Women also expressed an expert opinion on education & science (39%), charity & volunteering (37%), criminal chronicles (29%), ecology (28%), economics & business (24%).

Female expert opinion was heard the least in stories about war and politics (21% each), leisure (17%) and sport (13%). Most often, women were quoted by Zhytomyr and Kirovograd media (48% each), and Vinnytsia (46%). Zaporizhia and Donetsk media (20% each) and Kherson (17%) involved the least number of female experts.

As heroines, women most often appeared in materials about culture & religion (16%), sport (14%), charity & volunteering (13%), medicine & health care and social policy (11% each). They were least represented in materials about war (9%), politics (7%), and ecology (4%). By regions, Dnipropetrovsk media published the most stories about women (47%), Rivne – the least (15%).

Therefore, the last monitoring studies showed different results of gender balance in national and regional media. Thus, according to the research, in the first quarter of 2025, in national media, women were experts in 21% of all materials, in regional media – in 27–29%. The results regarding the number of heroines in the materials also differ: 16.5% of national media and 26% of hyperlocal media wrote about women (table 3). Monitoring data allows us to calculate average presence rate of men and women in Ukrainian online media: as experts this proportion is 74 : 26%, as heroes/-ines – 77% : 23%.

According data of Volyn Press Club (2025), the dominant topic in all media remains war, which is 35% of all materials. War topics were covered most often in Donetsk (95%), Kherson (85%), Luhansk (74%), and Kharkiv (68%) media. War remains a “male” topic: experts (those who are quoted) are men in 75% of cases, and heroes (those who are mentioned) are men in 84% of cases.

¹ Volyn Press Club (2025). More feminatives, but few women: results of monitoring the content of regional media in January 2025 [in Ukrainian]. URL: http://volynpressclub.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1272:-2025-&catid=10:gendermedia&Itemid=21

Table 3. Proportions of men and women in Ukrainian national and regional media content in the first quarters of 2024/2025, (%)

Representation in media content	National media				Regional media			
	2024		2025		2024		2025	
	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female
experts	83	17	79	21	60.5	39.5	71	29
heroes/-ines	77.5	22.5	83.5	16.5	66.5	33.5	83.5	26

Source: author's development

At the same time, according to IMI analysts, the Ukrainian media are more systematically using feminine noun forms, which indicates positive changes in language policy and perception of gender equality. During the monitoring period, only four out of ten national media made some cases of omitting feminatives.

The systematic use of feminine noun forms not only demonstrates compliance with modern language norms, but also helps to improve the visibility of women in the professions and in society. Feminatives indicate that women and men are equal in various fields, which helps to break down gender stereotypes.

But most importantly, the media influences public opinion and can break down stereotypical statements about women that have been imposed by the patriarchal system. This is why avoiding feminatives can create a false impression that certain professions or activities are only available to men, while women remain 'invisible'.

Positive dynamics in the use of feminine pronouns are also noted in regional media – in 2025, they were already 88 %. At the same time, there are media that used feminine noun forms in 100 % of their materials – Lviv editions, the second place was taken by Ivano-Frankivsk and Kherson (96 % each), and the third – by Khmelnytskyi (95 %). The lowest figure of 73 % in Sumy media is objectively still significant (a few years ago it was one of the highest).

Despite some differences in the monitoring methodologies and selection of various thematic arrays, the results of all studies demonstrate the insufficient visibility of women in materials about war.

These data also correlate with the results of monitoring on gender balance in the telethon “United News” (“Yedyni novyny”), conducted at the initiative of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine (2024)². To analyze the data, arrays of decoded TV stories broadcast by the telethon “United News” participants were collected. Out of 100,000 stories, 1,000 messages were randomly selected, so the sampling error does not exceed 1 %.

The picture of gender balance by the spokesperson roles of echoes that recorded in online media: men dominate in the category of high-ranking officials (over 93 %), and they are represented by a wide range of managers. The gap in the ratio

² Monitoring of media coverage of issues related to gender equality and the distribution of materials of a stereotypical or discriminatory nature (2024). 26–29 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://wim.org.ua/materials/monitorynh-stanu-vysvitlennia-v-onlayn-media-ta-telemarafonu-yedyni-novyny-pytan-shcho-do-hendernoi-rivnosti/>

of servicemen (98 %) and servicewomen (2 %) is even greater. Servicewomen are almost invisible in the context of performing tasks at the front: they mostly comment on the events of the war as information carriers, without being participants in hostilities.

Analysts note that in stories about the war, the term *khloptsi* 'guys' was often used as a synonym for "military personnel"; and this was not a deviation from the stories, since the heroes of the materials about the situation at the front were primarily men, but there was almost no mention of women fighting.

Men also have a noticeable advantage in the roles of law enforcement officers and managers (83 % each). They dominate in the roles of information carriers (69 %) and experts (67 %). Men in the media are more often positioned as having a certain social status, rather than just random speakers.

Women are quite noticeable in the role of public figures (66.7 %), usually they do not hold high positions, which is due to the lower level of representation of women in various government bodies and institutions, but due to their authority and publicity they can influence the adoption of certain decisions.

The percentage of women is high among self-employed individuals (42.9 %) and employees (50 %), who often appeared in everyday topics – such as food prices, utilities, and the work of small businesses during blackouts.

A significant proportion of women are in the categories of people who do not make decisions and/or do not hold leadership positions: in particular, these are victims of shelling (68.4 %) or eyewitnesses of attacks (47.7 %), who appear in the foreground in stories from frontline cities (men in this context are relegated to the background – according to established stereotypes, they should not complain, demonstrate their weakness or defenselessness). Women more often than men are portrayed as victims¹.

According to a survey conducted at the Gender Media Forum (2022)² in Ukraine, for most of the female respondents (54 %), war and the threats it contains are the greatest danger today, together with physical and sexual violence, psychological pressure, the threat of enslavement, manipulation and blackmail of children, loss of job, etc.

Risks of exploitation and gender-based violence are exacerbated during the conflict, forced displacement, temporary or shelter accommodation, and increased military presence. Among the serious threats, female respondents single out violence (17 %), including domestic ones: sexual, psychological, physical, and economic dependence on a man. Stereotypes about the role of women, the institution of the family, and the noticeable indifference of society to manifestations of violence also contain danger.

¹ Monitoring of media coverage of issues related to gender equality and the distribution of materials of a stereotypical or discriminatory nature (2024). 30 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://wim.org.ua/materials/monitoringh-stanu-vysvitlennia-v-onlayn-media-ta-telemarafonu-yedyni-novyny-pytan-shcho-do-hendernoi-rivnosti/>

² War, domestic violence and unemployment are the main threats for Ukrainian women today (2022). URL: http://volynpressclub.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1140:2022-09-30-18-52-16&catid=10:gendermedia&Itemid=21

The fear of being left without resources and means of livelihood is considered by 9% of female respondents as the main threat, but it is due to the war in Ukraine. So it can be said that in 2/3 of the cases, the war itself caused and deepened a number of dangers that many women in Ukraine now have to face.

14% of respondents see a whole complex of threats (their multiplicity), some of which are related to the war (life under occupation, lack of medical care, loss of property, sexual violence), and some “stretch” for years: the already mentioned domestic violence, harassment, discrimination, etc.

The vision of what needs to be done to make a woman feel safer can be grouped into the following levels:

1) physical and emotional (to defeat the enemy, try to create a safe-ecological psycho-emotional space; peace, stability, confidence in tomorrow);

2) economic (to provide work);

3) at the level of the state, institutions, public organizations (to improve legislation, strengthen control over its observance, state aid to single mothers who have lost their income, available psychological help, to respect women’s rights and freedoms, to ensure equal opportunities, to make society more emancipated);

4) personal (elementary skills in self-defense and providing medical assistance, legal literacy, to be able to defend one’s own rights, to have inner confidence in one’s own abilities, financial independence, women’s solidarity);

5) informational and educational: (to develop programs, to destroy gender stereotypes; to highlight women’s problems and ways to solve them in the media).

But at the same time, many researchers, including foreign ones, note positive changes in the general gender picture in the media.

Orgeret & Mutsvairo (2022)³, researching the gender aspects of war coverage in Ukraine, cited the words of J. Goldstein, who believed that the connection between war and gender is the most consistent gender issue in national cultures. This is the result of traits identified with masculinity being consistently portrayed as aggressive and more characteristic during times of war.

According to traditional gender stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, which reflect the expectations of behaviour and attributes formed in the public consciousness, men are characterised by activity, dominance, competence, rationality and authority, while women are characterised by passivity, excessive emotionality, helplessness and vulnerability. The defining characteristics of masculinity are functioning in public space, power, emotional restraint and severity, while femininity is defined by staying in private space, reproductive and care work, emotional management skills.

The representation of war in the media shows men as active subjects, while women are assigned a subordinate role, emphasizing their vulnerability and identification with

³ Orgeret K. S. & Mutsvairo B. (2022). Ukraine coverage shows gender roles are changing on the battlefield and in the newsroom. *The Conversation*. URL: <https://theconversation.com/ukraine-coverage-shows-gender-roles-are-changing-on-the-battlefield-and-in-the-newsroom-179601>

traditional roles. Iraola & Peña-Fernández (2023)¹ note, that “in the visual narrative placed on the front pages of the world press about the war in Ukraine, women have a high presence but appear as secondary and silent characters, fixed in the roles of victims, people who need to be protected”.

According to MCIP analysts (2024)², women are more likely than men are portrayed as victims or ordinary witnesses of events. To some degree, this contributes to the representation of women in the media space as disadvantaged people – generally weaker and more vulnerable to the everyday difficulties associated with war.

At the same time, it is considered less socially desirable for men in the media to complain about problems – the classic image of a defender who, despite fear, bravely repels enemy attacks and liberates his homeland from the occupiers, as well as personally protecting his relatives and homes, is more traditional.

Thompson (2019) claims, that traditional representations of men have ascribed certain attributes to male characters such as strength, power, control, authority, rationality and lack of emotion. In other words, media representations of men have reinforced hegemonic masculinity: “The media help construct violent masculinity as a cultural norm. Media discourse reveals the assumption that violence is not so much a deviation but an accepted part of masculinity” (Thompson, 2019)³.

Instead, women are often portrayed as being driven by concern for others and pacifism. At first, glance, reporting on the war in Ukraine seems to reinforce these gender stereotypes: women and children leave the country, while men stay to fight. But, if we take a closer look, a large part of the news about the war in Ukraine shows a change in gender roles during the war. Television reports show crying men, devastated by how life has changed in an instant, saddened by separation from departing families. And in one of her posts, Olena Zelenska published a photo of women soldiers, rescuers, doctors, mothers, writing “that our current resistance also has a particularly feminine face”.

Ukrainian women have always been an active part of the fight of Ukrainians for their independence and recognition. That tradition of resistance also continues at the present times. For example, according to an all-Ukrainian nationally representative poll conducted by InfoSapiens for the British Research Agency ORB (3–4 March 2022), 59 % of women were ready to personally participate in the armed resistance to end the Russian occupation of Ukraine⁴.

¹ Iraola M. E. & Peña-Fernández S. (2023). The Face of War. Women in the Photographs of the International Press during the Invasion of Ukraine. *Fotocinema: Revista científica de cine y fotografía*, 27, pp. 245–262 [in Spanish]. URL: <https://revistas.uma.es/index.php/fotocinema/article/view/15539>

² Monitoring of media coverage of issues related to gender equality and the distribution of materials of a stereotypical or discriminatory nature (2024). 26–29 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://wim.org.ua/materials/monitorynh-stanu-vysvitlennia-v-onlayn-media-ta-telemarafonu-yedyni-novyny-pytan-shchodo-hendernoi-rivnosti/>

³ Thompson K. (2019) Representations of men in the media, *RevisedSociology*, November 25. URL: <https://revisedsociology.com/2019/11/25/representations-of-men-in-the-media/>

⁴ Martsenyuk T. (2022). To be or not to be: Attitudes of Ukrainian society about gender equality and diversity after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. *Forum for Ukrainian Studies*, September 6. URL: <https://ukrainian-studies.ca/2022/09/06/to-be-or-not-to-be-attitudes-of-ukrainian-society-about-gender-equality-and-diversity-after-russias-invasion-of-ukraine/>

In September 2022, United24 platform posted video about Ukrainian female defenders. President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi commented on: “When it is about protecting freedom, it doesn’t matter whether you are a man or a woman. And the Ukrainians and our struggle proved it. Ukrainian women, on an equal footing with men, defend their native land and perform the most difficult tasks. Our army was and is one of those having the biggest number of women in its ranks”⁵.

Phillips & Martsenyuk (2023)⁶ emphasize, that “As autonomous agents, women in Ukraine are carving out new roles for themselves in a society at war. It is crucial to consider how women in Ukraine (and those living abroad as war refugees) are asserting their rights in all spheres of life as they take up new agentic roles and expand the repertoire of roles, duties, rights and responsibilities accrued to women in Ukrainian society”.

BBC (2023)⁷ conducted a special research, which provides a comprehensive understanding of how women are being affected by the war and how traditional gender roles are being affected by conflict. Researchers used a mix of traditional methodologies (nationally representative survey, focus groups, interviews with women and men) and then brought these findings with large-scale content analysis of the digital space in Ukraine using artificial intelligence.

This study found, that women and men generally support women participating in the war, but more conservative gender attitudes are evident – for example, women are still seen by some as ‘berehynia’, or guardians of the ‘home hearth’, but men are ‘elevated’ – especially in the media – as defenders and heroes.

Based on the results, the BBC analytics made some recommendations, among which it is important to cite the following:

- the disruption of gender roles and the strong sense of national unity could be leveraged for a positive impact on gender equality. Showcasing women contributing to the war effort in roles traditionally dominated by men, and demonstrating leadership, resourcefulness and decision-making, can help counter narratives which risk entrenching gender stereotypes.

- media and communication have a key role in ensuring an equal and balanced picture, by showcasing the issues and challenges faced by women, and the contributions of both men and women to the war effort. Media should ensure gender balance in content and output, and avoid stereotypes and norms.

The last recommendation (to ensure gender balance in content and products, and avoid stereotypes), in one form or another, is made by the vast majority of experts studying the situation in the Ukrainian media and ways to improve it.

⁵ The official channel of the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi (2022), September 9. URL: https://t.me/V_Zelenskiy_official/3184?fbclid=IwAR0PGQxhjYvUIFXI4-k4LoWFPXwfMTOMgYIRn-HCmWd-rkkbdA8MuXVL2SQo

⁶ Phillips S. D., Martsenyuk T. (2023). Women’s agency and resistance in Russia’s war on Ukraine: From victim of the war to prominent force. *Women’s studies international forum*, 98, 102731. URL: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277539523000584>

⁷ BBC (2023) Changing gender roles in conflict in Ukraine: a research study. URL: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/publications-and-resources/research/briefings/europe/ukraine/gender-perceptions/>

Ellner (2022), examining gender stereotypes in media coverage of the war in Ukraine, also considers, that binary picture painted by the current media narrative of traditional gender roles where women do the caring, and men do the protecting, fails to capture the diverse life experiences of Ukrainian women in relative peace and war. Researcher believes that, “when we look beyond stereotypes, we see that the agency of Ukrainian women in the face of extreme challenges and traumatic events is diverse and abundant. Portraying women as helpless victims reduces them to passive recipients, and undermines their dignity. Rendering invisible those women who do not conform to dominant gender stereotypes hurts their dignity just as much. Meaningful public discourse and policy that brings about valuable long-term support, avoids both” (Ellner, 2022)¹.

As Orgeret & Mutsvairo (2022)² believe, “these stories add nuance to the binaries commonly encountered in war reporting: brave vs. coward, active vs. passive, male vs. female. According to the researchers, such posts support new narratives that don’t differentiate between fighting and caring as actions of war. Gender shapes media content and is shaped by media content. A more complex and humane portrayal of gender in the media can also influence Ukrainians’ understanding and empathy for the danger and, ultimately, affect attitudes toward changes in international security policy”.

As noted in guide on gender monitoring of Ukrainian television channels (2023)³ in the context of security challenges and post-war reconstruction, it is important not to lose Ukraine’s achievements in implementing gender equality policy, which may be perceived as ‘out of date’. In particular, it is important to prevent the decline of women’s influence in decision-making, to provide women with equal access to military education and the security and defence sector (including at the decision-making level), to prevent and combat gender-based violence; to counteract the feminisation of poverty and the deterioration of the socio-economic situation of women, especially those from vulnerable groups; to pay attention to the physical and mental health of women and men, to promote women’s economic activity, to promote the ideas of gender equality and non-discrimination.

Conclusions

While there are some differences in the data of national and regional media monitoring, their results indicate a gender imbalance in Ukrainian media in favor of men. Women are underrepresented or misrepresented in stereotypical roles in Ukrainian media content. This is partly a consequence of the long-standing situation in society, where gender roles are relatively rigid, partly due to the full-scale war.

¹ Ellner A. (2022). Gender stereotypes in the media: Are Ukrainian women really only helpless victims? URL: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/gender-stereotypes-in-the-media-are-ukrainian-women-really-only-helpless-victims>

² Orgeret K. S., Mutsvairo B. (2022). Ukraine coverage shows gender roles are changing on the battlefield and in the newsroom. *The Conversation*. URL: <https://theconversation.com/ukraine-coverage-shows-gender-roles-are-changing-on-the-battlefield-and-in-the-newsroom-179601>

³ Gender monitoring of Ukrainian television channels: War theme (2023). URL: https://webportal.nrada.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Chastyna_2-Hendernyi-monitorynh-kanaliv-TB-Ukrainy_tematyka-viiny-2023-1.pdf

Analysts of MCIP (2024)⁴ warn that such a deepening of the gender divide has negative consequences for the unity of society, the personal well-being of people, and even for the country's defense capabilities. In the difficult conditions that Ukraine finds itself facing, it becomes important to comprehensively present all possible options for solving current problems during the war and the options for integrating each of its representatives into society, regardless of gender and personal qualities.

Despite the existing imbalance, we note the positive changes regarding the destruction of gender stereotypes and transformation of gender roles in Ukrainian society, reflected in changing representations of women in modern media. We can state that a new woman image – a female citizen of Ukraine – appeared in the media. This is a complex image that integrates different incarnations: mother, wife, housewife, female worker, defender and others, but isn't reducible to each. It is not equal to the sum of stereotypes but is a new integrated image, the key element in the construction of which is national identity. A woman appears as a citizen of a democratic society, a conscious and active voice of national interests and national spirit, who along with men contributes to the common cause, expresses readiness and will to achieve the national goal.

As noted in recent Ukraine's global perception report (Brand Ukraine, 2024)⁵ "an analysis of media coverage of Ukrainian events in terms of positive attributes (brand characteristics) used to describe Ukraine shows that the country is most often referred to as a "democratic country" (in 23 % of the mentions analysed) and a "nation of heroes" (20 %) <...> For the third consecutive year, "member of the European family" remains the third most popular brand attribute, appearing in 16 % of materials".

But strengthening and promoting the brand attributes of a democratic country and a member of the European family is impossible without further gender balancing of media content.

Recommendations

Overall, the monitoring results indicate the need for further work to ensure equal representation of women in the media space, as well as the importance of a consistent editorial policy on gender equality.

Given the current situation, many public non-governmental organizations developed recommendations to improve gender balance in Ukrainian media.

On August 14, 2024, at Ukrinform, NGO "Women in Media" presented the "Gender Equality Policy in the Media Content"⁶, developed with the support of the OSCE and recommended by the Commission on Journalistic Ethics. The State

⁴ Monitoring of media coverage of issues related to gender equality and the distribution of materials of a stereotypical or discriminatory nature (2024). 26–29 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://wim.org.ua/materials/monitorynh-stanu-vysvitlennia-v-onlayn-media-ta-telemarafonu-yedyni-novyny-pytan-shchodo-hendernoi-rivnosti/>

⁵ Brand Ukraine (2024). Ukraine's global perception report 2024. URL: <https://brandukraine.org.ua/en/analytics/ukraines-global-perception-report-2024/>

⁶ OSCE. Gender Equality Policy in the Media Content (2024). URL: https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/d/574325_0.pdf

Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men until 2030 requires ensuring media coverage of information in a gender-sensitive manner. Editorial boards are suggested to adopt this policy and strictly adhere to it. In particular, in the representation of women and men in the content, it's recommended:

- ensure that both men and women are mentioned equally in news and event materials;
- promote a positive image of women as active participants in social, sporting, economic and political life;
- track how many men and women were mentioned in materials and how they are distributed according to various characteristics, such as affiliation with a national community, disability, gender identity, etc.;
- support women's meaningful participation in the materials as experts: give them a voice, instead of talking about women in indirect language or mentioning them only in passing;
- track and measure the percentage of stories in media focused on women and/or gender-based violence, as well as the percentage of time or space devoted to stories where women are the sources of information or views;
- maintain a balanced representation of women and men by inviting experts and specialists from those topics in which women are unfairly underrepresented, in particular in military affairs, army, politics, economics, finance, etc., and not only in education, the social sphere, culture and art;
- apply the principles of gender equality for different types of content;
- ensure gender equality in materials on all spheres;
- avoid inappropriate comments about the appearance of women and men;
- not to promote stereotypical images of femininity/womanliness and masculinity/manliness that impose ideas about certain mandatory types of behavior, personal qualities, or external characteristics are mandatory for a person of a particular gender;
- select visualizations for materials to be consistent with gender policy;
- not to emphasize on gender, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity, nationality or race, disability, social and marital status, unless this is an important, substantively determined component of the material;
- use gender statistics, i.e. statistics disaggregated by sex;
- use feminine forms according to Ukrainian spelling, as this practice is important for increasing the visibility of women's social and political contribution.

And it is worth starting to train specialists who are competent in gender-sensitive journalism at the stage of education. Today, many universities already offer educational programmes or disciplines (or separate modules) that allow for the acquisition of gender competencies (Balalaieva, 2022)¹.

¹ Balalaieva O. (2022). Trends of journalism education in terms of sustainable development. *International Journal of Philology*, 26 (1), 90–99. URL: <https://doi.org/10.31548/philolog2022.01.090>

On February 28, 2025, Volyn Press Club and Internews Europe presented recommendations for editorial boards and journalists of Ukrainian media “Gender-Sensitive Media” (2025)², including:

- maintain gender balance, enrich materials with comments from women: the presence of women and men in the information space makes their participation in the socio-political life of the country visible, and therefore can contribute to an increase in their number in professions that are stereotypically atypical for them;
- provide information taking into account the gender aspect: the gender aspect is in every sphere of life, in simple terms – “gender is everywhere where there are people”, and therefore we can include a gender focus in all materials that relate to our life;
 - help colleagues see the gender aspect in their materials;
 - avoid stereotyping the heroes/heroines of the materials: it is worth refusing to relay gender stereotypes – either directly or by quoting the heroes/heroines (exception – when, on the contrary, we want to show the stereotypical thinking, sexism of a certain person);
 - write materials on gender issues: these can be both analytical articles and reviews, interviews, reports, blogs, author’s columns, audio programs and podcasts, videos for YouTube and short Reels for social networks, etc.;
 - use feminatives: feminatives are the visibility of women at the lexical level, and as a consequence, at the worldview level;
 - use gender-sensitive language in life and professional activities: using correct vocabulary is compliance with professional and ethical standards of journalism: objectivity, ethics, avoiding discrimination on any grounds, etc.;
 - initiate / participate in / assist in organizing / organize events to increase gender sensitivity in the media or society;
 - adhere to gender-sensitive editorial policies.

Promoting gender equality is not only an ethical value but also a strategic necessity: gender equality is a key driver of economic and social stability, part of Ukraine’s European integration obligations.

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1.3. The Dialogue of Ukrainian and European Values as the Foundation for Shaping Ukraine's Image

Vira Dodonova

Doctor of Philosophy, Professor

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

03041, 15, Heroiv Oborony Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

URL: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4282-5495>

Victoriia Shekhovtsova-Burianova

Postgraduate student

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

03041, 15, Heroiv Oborony Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

URL: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4227-2253>

Abstract

The section of the monograph is devoted to the problem of forming a positive image of Ukraine in the aspect of modern geopolitical realities. The basis of this process is the dialogue and affinity of European and Ukrainian cultural values. The purpose of this section is to clarify the identity and differences of the cultural values of Ukraine and Europe and determine their role in the formation of a positive image of Ukraine. It is emphasized that the process of forming a positive image of the state is long, work on it should be carried out at a high professional level, since a positive image of Ukraine contributes to strengthening the effectiveness of the state's foreign and domestic policy. The section provides a discourse on the concept of "value". In addition to involving dictionaries and monograph texts, the author uses the capabilities of artificial intelligence in defining "values". The system of values is revealed: a meaningful life, a vital system, an interactional, and a socializational system. To the usual complex of European values, such as freedom, democracy, and equality, others are added: "inner world", "deep respect for ordinary life", "self-fulfillment", as well as "freedom", "acceptable difference" and "practical rationalism of world domination". Among the Ukrainian values, the following are being analyzed: "desire for Order", "heartiness and sincerity", "freedom", "a feeling of a special connection with the environment", "a feeling of involvement in the affairs of other people", "the ability to overcome geopolitical traumas". Ukrainian cultural values are an open system, complemented by other components. Having demonstrated in the table the kinship of the values of Ukraine and Europe, we come to the conclusion about the kinship of cultures that make Ukraine an integral part of European society. This fact should have a positive impact on the formation of the image of Ukraine.

Keywords: *image, intercultural communication, value, system of values, Europe, Ukraine, dialogue of values.*

Introduction

Ukraine's orientation towards intercultural cooperation and its movement towards a unified world and European society makes it necessary to study not only its political, economic and cultural situation, but also the peculiarities of the socio-political system of other countries. It is necessary to constantly compare traditions and values that exist in different cultures in order to harmonize intercultural communication and understand other cultures in the processes of integration. Important in the interaction of nations is the recognition of the originality of other

peoples, a tolerant attitude towards value orientations, and the ability to conduct constructive communication. As Mykola Ishchenko and Oksana Pietsukh note: "By absorbing the experience of others, the Ukrainian nation will be able to better present its inherent features and achievements to the world. Ukraine's entry into the process of integration of cultures and nations opens up prospects for expanding the communication space, eliminating communication barriers, creating opportunities for effective polylogue of cultures"¹.

It is in this polylogue of cultures that the image of a country and state is outlined, since self-knowledge of one's own culture and the cultures of other peoples is one of the conditions for preparing for the creation of a worthy image. The image of a country affects its perception on the world stage, and ultimately, decisions about partnership, (non)provision of assistance, and support in wartime depend on it. We see how easily yesterday's "allies" can turn into "mediators", motivating their actions with a negative image of the country.

Currently, Ukraine, like Europe, is going through difficult times, which will affect the configuration of world powers in the future. Some world players question the value of Ukraine as a country fighting for its independence and subjectivity. Therefore, one of the priorities of intercultural communication of Ukraine should be the creation and advertising of its positive image in the international arena.

Their priority should be increased attention to disseminating the value orientations and achievements of Ukrainian culture. Ukrainian diplomats, scientists, public and cultural figures need to advocate for the national interests of Ukraine, make efforts to disseminate information about the country's cultural achievements, about its value preferences and prospects, demonstrating the kinship of the value orientations of our people and European countries. Such a policy will contribute to the consolidation of the Ukrainian people within the country, since the positive image of Ukraine as a progressive state is a powerful factor in the solidarity of the nation.

The purpose of this section is to clarify the similarities and differences between the cultural values of Ukraine and Europe and determine their role in shaping a positive image of Ukraine.

The concept of a country's image

The image of a country in the world is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, in foreign policy relations is the image that plays a leading role. A special feature of the image of a state is its relative stability, since modern ideas about the countries of the world were formed not at once, but over many years under the influence of various factors and significant historical events. The image of Ukraine as a sovereign state began to take shape in the early 90s. The declared course of development of Ukraine as a democratic, people-oriented country with a market economy, observance of human rights and freedoms, gave our state a certain credit of trust in the international community. Today, in conditions of war, we maintain the image of an

¹ Mykola Ishchenko, Oksana Pietsukh (2008). The Image of Ukraine in the Context of Global Transformational Processes. *Political Management*, 4. URL: https://ipiend.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ishchenko_imidzh.pdf

honest international partner, a state that fights for its existence without violating the rights and freedoms of other states.

The issue of forming a positive image of countries in the international space is the subject of analysis by Ukrainian and foreign researchers, namely: K. Savon, O. Chumak, I. Lakhtionov, V. Khrypun, I. Yeremeyeva, L. Khorishko, O. Chechel, V. Chekalyuk, J. Hillman, G. Wallace, K. Boulding, A. Semchenko, T. Vodotyka, E. Magda, A. Bugar, J. Shariatt, A. Starostina, V. Kravchenko, G. Lychova, O. Kosheleva.

Thus, Ukrainian researchers T. Vodotyka, T. and E. Magda emphasize that “the image of a country is a system of ideas of a rational and emotional nature, based on a comparison of a wide range of indicators of the state’s development, information and assessments determined by one’s own experience, on the basis of information and rumors determined in the information space”¹.

According to O. Chechel, the image of a state is a complex of interrelated features that form the state system (national, political, geographical, demographic, economic, social, etc.), which were created within the framework of the evolution of statehood, which is a complex multifactor subsystem that functions in the world order, the effectiveness of the interaction of its components determines the state and level of development of the state².

As V. V. Chekalyuk notes, “the image of the state is a purposeful, modeled by a group of specialists reflection, really – a virtual image, which has... four basic components, which can be considered as levels of the image. First, it is a certain initial material, which is pre-processed in order to minimize negative and maximize positive qualities. Second, it is a model superimposed on the prepared initial material. Third, it is the inevitable distortions introduced by the channels of image transmission, primarily the media and means of its replication. Fourth, it is the result of adhering to a professionally defined strategy and action plan, active interaction between the audience and the subject of perception, who constructs in his consciousness a final holistic image based on the model, which is proposed and implemented taking into account certain ideas and expectations of both the audience and the object of imaging”³.

The formation of the country’s image should be influenced by constant interaction with other countries, which results in increased interest in Ukrainian culture and the peculiarities of its cultural perception by representatives of other nations. However, the processes of global social changes and cultural dynamics do not automatically lead to a rapid change in worldview, since public consciousness is an inert phenomenon when it comes to positive changes. On the other hand, negative connotations are perceived quickly and are imprinted in historical memory for a long time.

¹ Vodotyka T., Magda E. Games of reflections. How the world sees Ukraine / editor-in-chief O. S. Kandyba. X. : Vivat, 2016. 352 p.

² Chechel O. Yu. (2016). Formation of the image of the state in the international arena. *Investments: practice and experience*, 10, 82–86.

³ Chekalyuk V. V. Formation of the image of Ukraine in the media: monograph. Kyiv : Center of Free Press, 2016. P. 25.

According to O. B. Kosheleva, “creating a positive international image of Ukraine is a necessary condition for ensuring the protection of its national interests, adherence to the strategic course towards European integration, successful competition in the international sales and investment market; popularization of cultural values in the world community”⁴.

The process of forming a positive image of the state is a painstaking, long, thorny path, work on it must be conscious, continuous and carried out at a high professional level. Since it is necessary to realize the fact that a positive image of Ukraine in general contributes to strengthening the effectiveness of the state’s foreign and domestic policy. It should be noted that only by popularizing the spiritual achievements of the nation, a positive image of the state cannot be achieved. “This is achieved due to the connection with strategic opportunities, which determines its place and significance in the world ranking, and also contributes to ensuring and protecting national cultural interests. Information and propaganda activities that enhance the international image of Ukraine are supported by real positive changes in all sectors, both in the economy and in the political, cultural and social life of our country”⁵. It provides for a set of measures aimed at informing the target audience.

How can a positive image of a state be defined? Here are a few of them. “We consider a positive image of a state to be one that is recorded by public opinion, formed under the influence of the media, under conditions of long-term democratic leadership, the country’s aspiration for the development of all spheres and moral perfection and harmony of individuals, where every citizen is a component of a successful state”⁶.

In other words, a positive image of a country is appropriately interpreted as “stable, substantiated by economic indicators, in the absence of recession and corruption, with the preservation of identity, cultural and historical heritage and traditions”. That is, the image of a country is “an emotionally colored perception that is purposefully formed thanks to the media. The basic components of the state image are history, traditions, geographical and ethnic features, and the cultural heritage of the people”⁷.

In the modern geopolitical situation, the image of the state is a powerful potential that not only determines the foreign policy relations of the country in the international space, but also helps to establish a marker of the attitude of the international community towards the country and its citizens. A positive image of the state is a kind of key to international respect, characterizes the state as a successful economically and politically influential participant in international relations and helps to increase the authority of the country among the main international players.

In this aspect, it will be interesting to understand the main characteristics that the image of the state should correspond to. According to V. Chekalyuk, the image

⁴ Kosheleva O. B. (2021). The international image of Ukraine as an instrument of the cultural paradigm. *Grail of science*, 5, 405. URL: file:///C:/Users/Administrator/Desktop/MIZNARODNIJ_IMIDZ_UKRAINI_AK_INSTRUMENT_KULTURNOI_%20(2).pdf

⁵ Ibid., p. 404.

⁶ Ibid., p. 405.

⁷ Chekalyuk V. V. Formation of the image of Ukraine in the media: monograph. Kyiv : Center for Free Press, 2016. P. 27.

should be, firstly, holistic, collective (when a certain impression of the country is created with the help of official signs and symbols: coat of arms, flag, etc.); secondly, believable, reliable (based on reputation, historical aspects and trust); thirdly, clear and charismatic (appeals to spirituality, mental receptors, feelings and sensations, focused on certain features and associations); fourthly, easily accessible, simplified for perception (in order to avoid double interpretation, the image should be as concise as possible and simpler than the object itself); fifthly, relevant (i.e., meet the needs of the audience, balance between feelings and reason, expectations and reality)¹.

The image of a country is based on its priority values. At the same time, in philosophical discourse, the concept of value denotes:

1. A holistic organic reaction of a person, which concerns the acceptance or rejection of some phenomena and which subsequently serves as a motive for human behavior.

2. The significance of certain things or phenomena for a person.

3. Those properties of things and phenomena in their relation to a person, which are formed or fixed by social relations between people².

The definition of values in modern philosophical thought fluctuates between norms and desires. Very often, speaking of values, we actually declare our desires. These are not identical concepts.

It is worth adding that in psychology there are four main types of personal value systems:

1. A meaningful life system that defines the goals of existence, human essence, the values of freedom, truth, beauty, that is, universal human values.

2. Welcome system: values of preserving and maintaining everyday life, health, safety, and comfort.

3. Interactional system: values and judgments important in interpersonal and group communication (good relationships, clear conscience, power, mutual assistance).

4. Socialization system, i.e. values that determine the process of personality formation³.

The author of this classification – I. Filipova – attributes these value systems purely to the individual, or more precisely – to the altruistic individual. At the same time, such a classification has a more universal nature, which allows it to be extrapolated to the social and societal level, using it as a methodological basis for organizing and comparing European and Ukrainian values.

The concept of “European values” in philosophical discourse

Since the subject of this theoretical exploration is European values, it would be appropriate to turn to the analysis of the discourse of studying this concept. When we talk about the values of Europe, several stereotyped thoughts usually arise in our

¹ Chekalyuk V. V. Formation of the image of Ukraine in the media: monograph. Kyiv : Center for Free Press, 2016. P. 75.

² Petrushenko V. Explanatory Dictionary of Basic Philosophical Terms. Lviv: Publishing House of the National University “Lviv Polytechnic”, 2009, 264 p.

³ Filipova I.Yu. Value-semantic sphere of altruistic personality. In the book: *Psychology. Values. Spirituality* : Monograph. Lutsk, 2018. P. 140.

imagination. First, Europe is a holistic homogeneous subject of socio-political action. Second, the main values are visualized immediately, namely democracy, freedom and rationality. Let us try to understand these axiological problems, starting from the collection of articles by German authors “Cultural Values of Europe”, which analyzes the socio-philosophical discourse of value orientations of Europe.

Thus, Wolfgang Schluchter in the article “Rationality – the Specificity of Europe?” emphasizes that “Europe, and this should be noted, was not, and is not, therefore, a once and for all established quantity, but rather a historical construction that participants and observers constantly reinvented and introduced into reality. But despite all the variability, Europe has relatively stable outlines, which primarily concern Western Europe. However, today, when we are increasingly arguing about the borders of the European Union, we should more often recall the apt formulation of the Frenchman François-Poncet, who once said: there are “no convincing historical, geographical and cultural grounds that would allow us to clearly define the borders of the European Union. Europe is a political and cultural construction dependent on the interests of the designers”⁴.

Or Michael Borgholte in the article “How Europe Found Its Diversity” points out: “Anyone who expresses a judgment about Europe in our time usually has in mind the union of democratic states called the European Union. Although everyone knows that Europe and the EU are not identical, it is still considered possible that as a result of future enlargements of this union of states, these concepts will become equivalent”⁵.

So, when we use the term “Europe” today, we mean the 28 member states of the European Union, which are united by the principles of European integration, namely the European values, clearly stated in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, adopted on December 7, 2000 in Nice.

It should be noted that, developing, the system of “European values” has gone through several important historical stages, which introduced certain adjustments into it. These are the Greco-Roman period, the Judeo-Christian period, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the final approval of liberalism, the controversial period between the First and Second World Wars, the modern stage of the creation of the European Union. “Each historical milestone has contributed to what can now be conditionally called “European values”, namely: a certain attitude towards man, his place and role in society, and also – attitude towards property”⁶. Providing a brief historical background, we will clarify that the concept of “European values” has come into circulation in EU documents and declarations since 1970. Historically, the category of “European values” has become directly linked to the category of “European identity”

⁴ Wolfgang Schluchter (2014). Rationality – a Specificity of Europe? Cultural Values of Europe / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt. Translated from German. Kyiv : Spirit and litera. 252 p.

⁵ Michael Borgholte (2014). How Europe found its diversity? Cultural values of Europe / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt. Trans. from German. Kyiv : Spirit and litera. 552 p.

⁶ Bondarets M. V. (2018). Strategies for the dissemination of European values as an instrument of EU global policy. *European cultural and historical values: retrospective and prospective* : collection of scientific works / ed. O. V. Zernetskaya. Kyiv : State Institution “Institute of World History of the NAS of Ukraine”. P. 122.

since December 14, 1973. It was then that the Declaration on European Identity was signed in Copenhagen by nine member states of the European Communities¹. “Within the framework of this declaration, it was emphasized that the participating states share the same attitude towards life, which is based on the belief that the needs of every person should be realized in society, the principles of representative democracy and the rule of law should be protected, and social justice as the main goal of economic progress, respect for human rights were highlighted as the fundamental foundations of European identity”².

European values are standards of certain activity algorithms in various spheres of life of society and the state. It is possible to outline the main European values on which the European community is based – this is respect for human dignity, fundamental rights, including the rights of the community and families, freedom (freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of the media), democracy, equality of all members of society, including minorities and regardless of gender, the rule of law, pluralism of opinions, lack of discrimination, tolerance, justice, responsibility, equal gender rights³, etc.

Hans Joas emphasizes that the value complexes of Europe are “inner peace”, “deep respect for ordinary life”, “self-realization”, as well as “freedom”, “acceptable difference” and “practical rationalism of world domination”, which originated at certain stages of European history and have today become self-evident parts of culture⁴.

Let us consider in more detail the justification of these value positions as the “axiological coordinates” of Europe.

Thus, the “idea of the inner world of man” has its roots in Socratic and Platonic philosophy, namely the understanding of thinking as a decisive factor in the attitude towards the world, as well as the Christian understanding of the inner world of man, religious contemplation in the persons of Augustine and Eckhart. As Kurt Flash notes, “this discovery of the value of the inner world of man became an element of European identity; it was often presented in this role. Less well known is another achievement of European thought: it reflected on the value of the inner world and did not silence the considerations that were also produced by the culture of the inner; it revealed the problematic that its discovery contained. At the same time, it revealed the ambivalence of the inner world, indicating the need for its supplementation. European philosophy was aimed not only at self-examination and confession; it was a process of reflection on the inner world”⁵.

¹ Document on The European Identity published by the Nine Foreign Ministers on December 14, 1973, in Copenhagen. URL: https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/02798dc9-9c69-4b7d-b2c-9-f03a8db7da32/publishable_en.pdf

² Ibid. p. 123.

³ Piren M. I. (2016). European values – determinants of change in modern Ukraine. Kyiv : Druk. Art. P. 14.

⁴ Cultural Values of Europe (2014) / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt. Translated from German. Kyiv : Duh i litera, P. 25.

⁵ Kurt Flash. The Value of the Inner World (Innerlichkeit). *Cultural Values of Europe* / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt (2014). Translated from German. Kyiv : Spirit and litera, 552 p. P. 228.

The value of a person's inner world in the Christian tradition is most vividly described in the Gospel of Luke about how the sisters Martha and Mary hospitably received Jesus. Moreover, Martha bothered to treat Jesus, and Mary sat at His feet and listened. Kurt Flash emphasizes that "a wise life consists not in the pleasure of contemplation, but in the subordination of external action to the best of what we know, which is required by love"⁶. Thus, European axiology "did not discover a single value in the inner world, it reflected it in a special way and in a special way intensified the tension between the inner world and activity"⁷. Today, the inner world of a person is under threat, so reflections on this issue are very timely. We have an ambivalent situation. On the one hand, a person immerses himself in his inner world, hiding from the external threatening environment; on the other hand, the modern inner world very often has an ugly form in the form of a few minutes of meditation, maxims of lyricists, and reasoning of artificial intelligence.

The second cultural value that the authors of the monograph highlight is "a deep respect for ordinary life". The elevation of the everyday to the level of values should be associated with Judeo-Christian norms, not with the Greek tradition, as should the interest in the individual, which is also based on Christian values.

To illustrate this value, one should "recall the early modern European Dutch still life, which depicts not saints, kings or mythological figures, but ham, grapes, a glass of wine"⁸. Wolfgang Reinhart emphasizes that the main components of European everyday life were "work, trade, usury and sexuality"⁹. The author shows how in the history of Europe, everyday economy, sexual relations are legitimized, and love is singled out as a type of spiritual activity. He emphasizes that values always correspond to the needs of social groups, although this does not mean that they are an element of group ideology. In this case, "we are talking about the emancipation of the laity from the clergy. After all, we are dealing with the acquisition of value by typical types of secular activity – work, making money, love – which have no meaning for the life of the clergy, who at best put up with them or even despise them altogether"¹⁰.

The third cultural value of Europe – "self-realization" – arises at the end of the 18th century as a result of the weakening of the estate structure, the consequence of the Great French Revolution and the practical implementation of the ideas of the Enlightenment. The value of self-realization is connected with the problem of freedom and authenticity of a person, defined as a free or worthy life, which is "my own" life.

The realization of the goal of development, therefore, no longer occurs in a pure process of "maturation", so to speak, without one's own help, but requires the efforts of the individual and his self-knowledge. If at first, the process of self-realization

⁶ Kurt Flash. The Value of the Inner World (Innerlichkeit). *Cultural Values of Europe* / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt (2014). Translated from German. Kyiv : Spirit and litera, 552 p. P. 232

⁷ Ibid., p. 232.

⁸ Wolfgang Reinhart "Asserting the Meaning of Everyday Life". *Cultural Values of Europe* / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt. (2014). Trans. from German. Kyiv : Spirit and litera, P. 310.

⁹ Ibid., p. 310.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 310.

concerned abstract entities, then later this activist turn was aimed at individualization: the goal of the individual's development differs from the goals of other people. Christopher Menke emphasizes, "the ideal of authenticity or self-realization is aimed at the correspondence between the natural forces of the individual and the socially acquired form of the subject. The ideal of authenticity or self-realization establishes the practice of a new radical form of criticism of culture and society"¹. Freedom in the understanding of the romantics is aimed at relations of expression or correspondence: between what I do and what I am.

In the post-romantic culture of Europe, self-realization forms its own form of publicity. However, this is "publicity of a special kind: it is not a homogeneous medium in which all individuals appear as the same person. It is an arena of struggle – an agonal medium"².

In addition to the three value complexes mentioned above, the basic cultural values of Europe are "freedom", "acceptable difference" and "practical rationalism of world domination".

In the textbook, in social and humanitarian thought, freedom is considered the main European value. Orlando Patterson, in his article "Freedom, Slavery, and the Modern Construction of Rights", emphasizes "freedom is a triune concept that emerges with the emergence of the West". He emphasizes that from the middle of the 5th century BC, the phenomenon of freedom emerges as "a cultural triad of personal freedom, civil freedom, and sovereign freedom. Personal freedom is the absence of restrictions on the desire to do what we like; civil freedom is the ability to participate in community affairs; sovereign freedom is the ability to do what we want, both in relation to ourselves and in relation to others (the latter aspect is more controversial today, but it was actively defended during Western freedom)"³.

The next European cultural value is "acceptable difference". According to Hans Joas, the latter is not identical with tolerance in the sense of protecting someone else's freedom. The history of this kind of tolerance begins only with the end of the Middle Ages. "That is why it would be a mistake to include tolerance (and not only acceptable difference) among the traditionally valid values of Europe. The idea of tolerance arose from a specific understanding of religious conflicts in Europe and North America and forced us to look for traces of its previous spread in the Middle Ages"⁴. On the contrary, when understanding the essence of the value "acceptable difference", we are talking about the historical diversity of Europe and the possibility of the existence of different European ethnic groups and countries.

¹ Christopher Menke (2014). Inner Nature and Social Normativity. The Idea of Self-Realization. *Cultural Values of Europe* / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt. Translated from German. Kyiv : Duh i litera. P. 356.

² Ibid., p. 362.

³ Orlando Patterson. Freedom, Slavery and the Modern Construction of Rights. *Cultural Values of Europe* / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt. (2014). Trans. from German. Kyiv : Duh i litera. P. 174.

⁴ *Cultural Values of Europe* / edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt (2014). Translated from German. Kyiv : Spirit and litera, 2014. P. 24.

The last European value is considered “the practical rationalism of world domination”. The process of rationalization has always been inherent in the history of humanity, but the emergence of a new quality and intensity is associated with the era of Modern Times and the emergence of bourgeois relations. It is in the process of rationalization that Western culture breaks up into autonomous value spheres: religion, science, law, morality, economics, politics, art. “The essence of the process of social rationalization lies not only in calculation, although this is also an important aspect of it, but in the liberation of the interests of an individual from the general interests of a social group. The growth of freedom and responsibility become central features of rationalization. According to Weber, the differentiation of value spheres is the key to explaining the rationalism that characterizes modern Western society”⁵.

Wolfgang Schluchter questions purposive rationality as the main characteristic of the axiological framework of Europe, which was formed mostly in the Modern Age. On the contrary, Weber saw many semantic bridges between antiquity, the Middle Ages and the early Modern Age, which lie both in institutional features and in spirituality. Although it is ascetic Protestantism that is original and has made a significant contribution to the development of the modern European cultural world. “After all, ethically founded professional humanity reaches far beyond the boundaries of the economy in its cultural significance. It forms the basis for theoretical and, above all, practical rationalism, the reverse side of which can be considered moral individualism”⁶. Thus, purposive rational orientations are always immanently connected with value-rational ones.

Cultural values of Ukrainians as Europeans

In the collective monograph “Spiritual Values of the Ukrainian People”, which was published in 1999 under the editorship of V. I. Kononenko, the basic values are called “national statehood, Christian faith and native language”. The authors explain their choice as follows: “The choice of these value priorities is dictated by their role in the national and spiritual revival of Ukraine. In studying the place of national statehood in the system of values of the Ukrainian people, emphasis is placed on the traditions of state formation, on the analysis of historical lessons, the consideration of which is necessary in the development of the Ukrainian state. Understanding the Christian faith as a value refutes the stereotypes of “scientific atheism” in the assessment of the religious phenomenon. The role of Christian values in the spiritual life of the Ukrainian people, their significance in national revival is revealed. Language as one of the main attributes of the nation is considered not only as a national value, but also as a means of national self-awareness, a factor of ethnic integration. This interpretation of language serves as the methodological basis of the state’s language policy at the present stage”⁷.

⁵ Dodonova V. I. (2011). Post-nonclassical discourse of social rationality : Monograph. Donetsk : Publishing house of DonNU. 345 p.

⁶ There, S. 271.

⁷ Spiritual Values of the Ukrainian People. (1999). Kyiv – Ivano-Frankivsk, Play. P. 5.

In other words, as in the case of freedom/slavery, the basic values of Ukrainians are a reaction to the prohibition and persecution that accompanied national development for a long historical period. The value of the state is a consequence of statelessness, the value of faith – of the persecution of the church, the value of language – of its prohibition. Such an approach, on the one hand, indicates the historical reasons for the emergence of the corresponding values in modern Ukrainian society, but on the other hand, suffers from tendentiousness and excessive politicization. Obviously, here it is necessary to distinguish between national and ethnic values.

For a correct comparison of European and Ukrainian values, it is worth referring to those of them that have received the status of cultural universals and have an archetypal basis. This approach is used, for example, by G. Filipchuk, who emphasized such important values for Ukrainians as unity, independence of Ukraine, national identity, human dignity, spiritual and political unity, a local single Ukrainian church, statehood, the Ukrainian language, respect for national memory and one's own history, social justice, welfare, education, innovation, morality of civil society, European choice and Euro-Atlantic security.

N. V. Turpak systematically highlights the cultural values of Ukrainians in the section of the monograph “Geopolitical Subjectivity of Ukraine in the Face of Global Challenges”. Among them, she highlights:

“The Desire for Lad” – the value of order, harmony, the attempt to live by the rules, by the law. The archetypal source of the desire for Order is the phenomenon of Sophianism. The harmonizing order of Sophianism, according to S. Krymsky, manifested itself in the fact that “Ukraine has always been the border of safety of peoples from the chaos of the Great Steppe, the alternative to which was the reasonable oikumen of Kyivan Rus”¹. National culture contains vivid examples of the ordering and harmonious arrangement of human life in everyday life, economic activity, and social relations, recorded in Magdeburg law, Cossack law, Lithuanian legal statutes, the “Constitution of the Hetman State” by P. Orlyk, the work of figures of the Cyril and Methodius Society, the work of M. Drahomanov², etc.

“Heartfulness and spirituality” are the defining values of Ukrainians, which are associated with the significance of moral and ethical aspects in spirituality and the way of being and activity of a person and the people. The archetypal source of warmth and spirituality is cordocentrism as a “philosophy of the heart”. Due to the appearance of the phenomenon of “philosophy of the heart” in Ukrainian culture, a cordocentric line of Ukrainian humanistic philosophizing was formed, which manifested itself in the work of prominent Ukrainian philosophers: H. Skovoroda, P. Yurkevich,

¹ Krymsky S. (2010). On Sophianism, Truth, and the Meanings of Human Being : A Collection of Scientific, Journalistic, and Philosophical Articles. Kyiv. P. 382.

² Turpak N. (2024). Axiological principles of establishing the geopolitical subjectivity of Ukraine Geopolitical subjectivity of Ukraine in the context of global challenges : monograph / Grabovska I., Grabovsky S., Dodonov R., Kagamyk S., Marutyanyan R., Nastoyasha K., Turpak N., Chupriy L. Kyiv : Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. 330 p., P. 236.

T. Shevchenko, P. Kulish, M. Gogol, and also largely determined the features of the Ukrainian mentality³.

“Love of freedom, the desire for freedom” is a value that is associated with the significance of the moral-volitional principles of being and behavior of a person and the people. Love of freedom (the desire for freedom) has archetypal origins. This path began with the formation of the principles of personal freedom, heroic moral ideals in the web of folk culture of the epic epic of the Kiev cycle.

“Feeling of a special connection with the environment (antheism)” is an essential value of Ukrainians, which is associated with the special significance of the natural environment, the native Earth and Home, with special respect for the area, which is the historical arena of the emergence of the people and its further development. The archetypal source of the feeling of a special connection with the environment is the symbol of Mother Earth, inextricably linked with the agrarian dimension of Ukrainian civilization, with the calendar ritual of peasant life, etc.

“The ability to overcome geopolitical traumas (resilience)” is a value of Ukrainians that was formed culturally and historically due to the need for Ukraine to overcome civilizational challenges at key stages of its development. M. D. Hrushevsky in his fundamental work “History of Ukraine-Rus” drew attention to the fact that the historical existence of the Ukrainian people took place in conditions of specific, harmonious geographical features. However, he also showed that the favorable territory could not provide its inhabitants with a happy life, because it always aroused the envy of its eastern neighbor. This factor, as well as the need for an exhausting “struggle with the steppe”, in M. Hrushevsky’s opinion, determined a certain fatality in the political fate of the Ukrainian people, severely affected its cultural, national and state-building development in the form of geopolitical trauma⁴. Historical resilience is the ability of Ukrainians to “take a hit”, each time recovering after suffering a historical trauma.

“A sense of involvement in other people’s affairs (solidarity)” is the spread of society and mutual assistance to a significant circle of people, which forms a sense of involvement in other people’s affairs, also has archetypal roots. The conditions for the formation of the Ukrainian ethnic group in a certain territory, a common language, faith, traditions, as well as the need to overcome the challenges of the natural environment and resist attempts at belligerent actions by aggressive neighbors have formed the need for collective activity, mutual assistance and solidarity communication. M. Popovych noted that the sense of involvement in other people’s affairs creates the basis for the formation of various types of solidarity, in particular, such a variety as national solidarity. With the help of the concept of solidarity, such aspects of involvement in other people’s affairs as shared responsibility, freedom, social justice, human rights are revealed⁵.

³ Turpak N. (2024). Axiological principles of establishing the geopolitical subjectivity of Ukraine Geopolitical subjectivity of Ukraine in the context of global challenges : monograph / Grabovska I., Grabovsky S., Dodonov R., Kagamlyk S., Marutyan R., Nastoyasha K., Turpak N., Chupriy L. Kyiv : Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. 330 p., P. 236–237.

⁴ Hrushevsky M. (1991). History of Ukraine-Rus. In 11 volumes, 12 books. Vol. 1. Kyiv. Pp. 2–3.

⁵ Popovych M. (2013). To be a human being. Kyiv. P. 216.

Concluding the review of worldview values, we would like to add that the highest value in Ukrainian culture remains the human being himself. In the context of understanding values as a social phenomenon, Ivan Franko's view on the values of human life is relevant, where he stated that they are free labor, freedom, and man as the highest value.

The value scale in modern Ukraine is changing quite quickly. Those value guidelines that were relevant a few years ago are now proving to be irrelevant and outdated. Thus, Ukrainian researcher Piren M. I., reflecting on the state of Ukrainian society in 2016, recorded the following value orientations among Ukrainian citizens: "orientation on material needs; constant narrowing of the field of social interest; plasticity of the mentality of the Ukrainian population, which continues with the ability to adapt to any changes; subordination of mass consciousness to a certain extent of influence of the mass media, which are not always responsible for information; lack of regulated functions of mass consciousness due to the lack of ideological and educational work in society; patience of part of the population of "ineffective authorities" even in a situation of relative freedom of choice of alternatives; low cultural exactingness and readiness sometimes to sponsor any cultural surrogates; "the growth of religiosity as a positive value, but not always effective in terms of active work and morality; the gradual growth of ethnocentrism and the feeling of being Ukrainian; the extreme unpopularity of violence, especially caused by terrorism and the war in Eastern Ukraine"¹. In 2025, some elements of such a scale of values cause frank surprise.

According to more recent sociological research, moreover, conducted during a full-scale war, Ukrainians have confirmed the value of a democratic system. According to the results of a survey by the Razumkov Center conducted in June 2024, the majority of Ukrainian citizens share democratic values that belong to European and Western ones. In particular, "61 % of respondents answered that democracy is the most desirable type of state system for Ukraine. 50.5 % agreed with the judgment "democracy is more important for our country than strict order in the country", while only 21 % agreed that "strict order is more important than democracy". 47 %, choosing between freedom and material prosperity, prefer freedom (and only 24 % – material prosperity). Support for democratic values is expressed to a greater extent than in 2021, that is, before the start of a full-scale war". As noted on the Center's website, "support for democratic values is more characteristic of those respondents who identify themselves with Ukraine (71.5 % of them answered that democracy is the most desirable type of state system for Ukraine), while among those who associate themselves with their settlement – 52 %, with the region – 46 %. They believe that democracy is more important for the country than strict order, 58.5 %, 43 % and 41 %, respectively. They prefer freedom to material wealth, 53 %, 41 % and 41 %, respectively"².

¹ Piren M. I. (2016). European values – determinants of change in modern Ukraine. Kyiv : Druk. Art. P. 13–14.

² Identity of Ukrainian citizens: trends of change (June 2024). Razumkov Center. URL: <https://razumkov.org.ua/napriamky/sotsiologichni-doslidzhennia/identychnist-gromadian-ukrainy-tendentsii-zmin-cherven-2024r>.

Dialogue of Ukrainian and European values

As already noted, intercultural communication occurs at different levels – economic, political, spiritual. In this process, the arsenal of values acts as a moral imperative, playing an important role and enabling full intercultural communication.

K. Grabczak emphasizes that Ethnic values can manifest themselves at the following levels: 1) the level of the ethnos (ethnic nation); 2) the level of the political nation; 3) the level of a separate civilization; 4) the world level. Therefore, ethnic values can be included in the values of larger communities, for example, in the values of a political nation, which includes a greater or lesser part of the ethnic nation, and in the values of certain civilizations. The values of Western (Euro-Atlantic) civilization are accordingly larger and broader than the values of a separate Ukrainian ethnos. In addition to ethnic, national values, European, universal values are distinguished.

If we return to the above-mentioned basic European and Ukrainian values and try to organize them according to value systems (according to the classification of I. Filipova), it becomes clear that in both cases there are correlations. The values identified independently by German and Ukrainian philosophers echo each other (Table 1).

Table 1. Correspondence between Ukrainian and European values

Value system	European values	Ukrainian values
life Meaningful	“freedom”, “practical rationalism of world domination”	“desire for harmony”, “warmth and sincerity”, “freedom (desire for freedom)”
Greeting	“a deep respect for ordinary life”	“a feeling of special connection with the environment (antheism)”
Interactive	“inner world” “accepted for distinction”	“a feeling of involvement in other people’s affairs (solidarity)”
Socialization	“self-realization”	“ability to overcome geopolitical traumas (resilience)”

It would seem that the presence of similar values in the general European and Ukrainian humanitarian space, which have been formed over the centuries and have their own archetypal origins, makes it possible to conclude about the “Europeanness” of Ukrainians. However, this is not yet a matter of dialogue. The latter involves not just a mechanical comparison, but also the interpenetration, mutual enrichment of values, which is achieved in intercultural communication. In scientific discourse, intercultural communication is defined as “a symbolic process of exchange, through which individuals, social groups, from two or more different cultural systems discuss common meanings in an interactive situation”³. That is why in intercultural communication, issues of empathy, understanding of each other by different people with different social and cultural orientations come to the fore.

³ Kislá G. O. (2022). Intercultural communication as an object of scientific discourse. *Intercultural communication in the context of globalization dialogue: development strategies* : materials of the II International Scientific and Practical Conference, November 25–26, 2022, Odessa. Part 1. Lviv – Toruń: Liha-Press. P. 369.

According to G. Kisla (2022)¹, intercultural communication includes: “1. Interaction, that is, joint creation of a conversation, joint creative action, creation of a new intellectual or material product. 2. Exchange of information, socio-cultural experience, and communication experience as well”. In this aspect, cultural diversity affects the content of communications, enabling creative use of the achievements of another culture, dialogue of cultures, and fostering interest in the Other. The basic basis of communications can be considered solidarity between communication subjects. This value is one of the basic values of both the European Union and Ukraine.

Another basis for value-oriented communication is tolerance. It appears in its traditional understanding as tolerance, as a behavioral imperative – “not to impose” one’s own uniqueness, as meaningful complementarity, as plurality in diversity. “Tolerance in the context of intercultural communication is, first of all, a respectful attitude towards various cultures in the world, towards the cultural characteristics of the communication partner, towards norms of behavior and expression of thoughts that differ from one’s own. Tolerance implies the ability of communicators to perceive certain facts from another culture, especially if they differ from the norms and customs of one’s own culture”².

Intercultural communication as a two-way process assumes the presence of a tolerant attitude and a desire for mutual understanding of all participants in intercultural communication. Understanding the role and significance of intercultural communication in resolving conflict situations, it is necessary to recognize the fact that scientists significantly exaggerate its capabilities. This situation should be described by the philosophical categories of “the current and the proper”, where the guidelines of intercultural communication act as a categorical imperative, as a factor of the proper. If intercultural communication were a panacea for all ills, then, of course, humanity would live a happy life. Using the modern tragic experience of Ukraine, it should be noted that it is necessary to communicate with states in the same language: either the language of dialogue, if such is possible, or the language of weapons, if there is no other choice.

It is worth noting that the gradual inclusion of Ukrainians in the pan-European dialogue is not a one-time act, but a long-term process. The number of Ukrainians who understand and share European values is constantly growing, which is recorded by sociological surveys. Here it would be appropriate to recall the functioning of large-scale research projects World Values Survey (WVS) and European Values Study (EVS), focused on longitudinal surveys on the evolution of values in different societies. At the global level, the program was launched by R. Inglehart, J. Kerkhoffs and R. de Moor, at the European level – by G. Joas, K. Menke, K. Flyash. Since the late 1990s, large-scale surveys have been conducted in Ukraine as well. As K. Grabchak

¹ Kisla G. O. (2022). Intercultural communication as an object of scientific discourse. *Intercultural communication in the context of globalization dialogue: development strategies* : materials of the II International Scientific and Practical Conference, November 25–26, 2022, Odessa. Part 1. Lviv – Toruń: Liha-Press. P. 369.

² Sulyatitska T. V. (2013). Intercultural interaction in the information society: communicative aspect: monograph / T. V. Sulyatitska. Kamianets-Podilskyi : PP “Medobory-2006”. P. 83.

notes, "...you can look at Ukrainian values against the background of a broader international panorama and, if necessary, compare them with the values of residents of other countries. According to the system proposed, R. Inglehart and his followers, in the display on the summary diagrams, the lower scale denotes the survival/self-realization dimension, and the upper one denotes the religious-traditional/secular-rational dimension. According to these dimensions, Ukraine has preferred and still prefers survival values over self-expression values and secular-rational values over religious-traditional ones. Unfortunately, it can be predicted that as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian war, Ukrainian values on this scale will tend to shift even more towards survival values"³.

In the context of the correlation of European and Ukrainian values, the opinion of Vajda T. S. is correct, emphasizing that "1) in general, the European worldview and values are recognized by Ukrainian citizens as a worthy ideal for imitation, they are a necessary condition for the normal functioning of a civilized society; 2) a number of basic European values are perceived by Ukrainians as an integral perspective of civilizational development, which must be strived for and which in the future may affect positive social trends in international communication; 3) at the same time, some Ukrainians are characterized by a tendency to hypothetically support these values, and in everyday practice, to implement them selectively"⁴. In order not to fall into everyday romanticism, Ukrainians should learn to distinguish "grain from chaff", rationalize the meanings of Western European values and the feasibility of their application in Ukrainian territories.

Conclusions

Summing up the results of philosophical reflection on the problem of dialogue of values and their role in forming a positive image of Ukraine on the world stage, the following should be noted.

1. The image of the country should be holistic, collective, the country should be guessed with the help of official signs and symbols: coat of arms, flag, etc.; reliable, based not on historical constructions, but on real historical facts, a deep layer of historical memory should be involved; charismatic, concise, which evokes positive emotions in consumers of products of the spiritual sphere of society; relevant, which would carry a pragmatic component, demonstrating our achievements.

2. The image of a country is an image that is formed on the basis of the world community's vision and assessment of the directions of the state's domestic and international activities over a long period of time, which determines its appropriate perception. The image of a country is a complex phenomenon that requires constant work on it by scientists, journalists, diplomats, who must permanently engage in advocacy of Ukraine on the world stage. This advocacy is not the result of the

³ Grabchak K. (2024). Ukrainian ethnic values and values of Western civilization. *Ukrainian Studies*, 4 (93). URL: <http://journal.ndiu.org.ua/article/view/317564/>

⁴ Vajda T. S. (2022). European values as a legal basis for intercultural communication of the Ukrainian people in the multinational population of the European Union. *Intercultural communication in the context of globalization dialogue: development strategies* : materials of the II International Scientific and Practical Conference, November 25–26, 2022, Odessa. Part 1. Lviv – Toruń: Liha-Press. 384 p. P. 349.

country's oppression during the war, on the contrary, it is necessary to accustom the world community to the fact that Ukraine is worthy of being respected and taken into account as an active subject of world politics.

3. In philosophical discourse, the following system of European values is usually announced: respect for human dignity, fundamental rights, including community and family rights, freedom (freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of the media), democracy, equality of all members of society, including minorities and regardless of gender, the rule of law, pluralism of opinions, lack of discrimination, tolerance, justice, responsibility, equal gender rights, etc. Instead, there is another set of cultural values of Europe that are not often found in scientific literature, namely: "inner world", "deep respect for ordinary life", "self-realization", "freedom", "acceptable difference" and "practical rationalism of world domination", which originated at certain stages of European history and have today become self-evident parts of culture.

4. The cultural and spiritual values of the ethnic group focus on its character, ideals, and traditions. They encode historical memory, the peculiarities of its mentality, and the vicissitudes of historical development. The system of Ukrainian values changed depending on the historical and socio-cultural context. Thus, the value palette of the first years of independence included three components: the national state, religion, and the Ukrainian language. Over time, these values did not yield to others, but were supplemented, in particular "the desire for Order", "heartiness and sincerity", "freedom (the desire for freedom)", "a feeling of a special connection with the environment (antheism)", "a feeling of involvement in the affairs of other people (solidarity)", "the ability to overcome geopolitical traumas (resilience)". Ukrainian cultural values are an open system that is constantly updated and supplemented by other components.

5. Analyzing the procedural nature of intercultural communication, it becomes obvious that it acts as a means of transmitting information about value systems, which can be acceptable and actualize the revision of one's own systems, or ignored and not influence these systems. Values are a semantic node of interaction between society and the individual, using value guidelines; one can explain the nature and content of intercultural relations. The peculiarities of European civilization are manifested in the created system of values, which have undergone a difficult path of transformation and today dominate the civilized world. Intercultural communication is implemented at the level of individual and social values, which intersect with each other and create a value-semantic complex. In the postmodern world, communication itself acts as a value, since it creates conditions for the realization of the creative potential of the individual. The kinship of the values of Ukraine and Europe indicates the kinship of ideals, cultures that make Ukraine an integral part of European society. This fact should influence the formation of a positive image of Ukraine.

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1.4. Ukraine in the Francophonie space: traditions and development strategies

Svitlana Heyko

Doctor of Philosophy, PhD Professor

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

03041, 15, Heroyiv Oborony Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

URL: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0119-7673>

Tatiana Heyko

Doctor of Philology, PhD Professor

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

URL: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-1290-4917>

Abstract

The monograph section examines the interaction of the state, society, culture and language using the example of Ukraine in the context of Francophonie. The modern meanings of the term "Francophonie" are considered, mainly as a set of states, countries and regions where French is used as a national language, as a language of international communication, work and culture; the second aspect denotes a set of people who use French in these functions; the third aspect is a spiritual community as a consequence of this use. The International Organization of La Francophonie is analyzed, the main vocation of which is to promote the development of diverse cooperation between fully or partially

French-speaking countries of the world. The wide range of interests of the International Organization of La Francophonie is demonstrated, which, in addition to issues of linguistic and cultural issues, includes such relevant areas of international cooperation as: strengthening peace and security, conflict prevention; development of democratic institutions, protection of human rights; ensuring sustainable development in the context of globalization; expansion of economic and technical cooperation, etc. Although the "Francophonie" is primarily a linguistic community, it increasingly promotes the development of cooperation between its members in areas that are not directly related to the French language, such as culture and education. An attempt has been made to conduct a general study of Ukrainian-French scientific, educational, and literary and artistic relations. Ukrainian-French cultural ties, cooperation between Ukrainian universities with scientific and educational centers in France, and the main areas of mutual influence in the field of literature, theater, music, and fine arts have been analyzed. Using the example of the French Institute in Ukraine, a number of initial missions are demonstrated, including: teaching French and organizing exams and tests in French, a media library, promoting studies in France, and providing scholarships to encourage university and scientific mobility, as well as popularizing French cinema. The main stages of Ukrainian-French socio-political relations are traced. The main events in the history of the formation of foreign policy relations between the two countries are briefly characterized. The main attention is paid to the development of socio-political ties between Ukraine and France during the period of independence. The main achievements and prospects of Ukrainian-French interstate relations at the current stage of their development are revealed.

Keywords: language politics, cultural policy, Ukrainian-French relations, French language, French-speaking space, French Institute in Ukraine.

Introduction

One of the most promising ways to implement the strategy of Ukraine's integration into the European community is the systematic deepening of bilateral cooperation with the leading EU countries, which creates the basis for reforming the Ukrainian economy, becomes an indispensable prerequisite for its competitiveness in the world market and serves as a manifestation of the integration process. Among the founders of the EU, perhaps the most significant role belongs to France. That is why the study of the traditions and development strategy of Ukraine in the Francophone space is an urgent problem.

The bibliography of works written on this topic includes many titles and covers various areas of humanitarian knowledge. Among them, an important place is occupied by the works of domestic scientists, their students and other authors who addressed this issue. In particular, in the interdisciplinary study of O. V. Kosovych¹, the problem of the plurality of language and culture of France and Francophonie is theoretically and practically highlighted; in O.D. Lauta², the diversification of the linguistic and cultural paradigm; in O. A. Ivanenko³, the Ukrainian-French scientific,

¹ Kosovych O. V. (2010). French language in the Francophonie space: monograph / Kosovych Olha. Ternopil : FOP Osadtsa Yu. V. 211 p. URL: <https://ru.scribd.com/document/599309475/Kosovuch-O-Monograf-fr>

² Lauta O., Geiko S., Heiko T. (2023) Diversification of the linguistic and cultural paradigm in the philosophical dimension of modernity. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 11 (3), 204–211. URL: [https://doi.org/10.31548/hspedagog14\(3\).2023.204-211](https://doi.org/10.31548/hspedagog14(3).2023.204-211)

³ Ivanenko O. A. (2009). Ukrainian-French relations: science, education, art (late 18th-early 20-th centuries). Kyiv : Institute of History of Ukraine, NAS of Ukraine. 320 p. 2023. URL: <https://irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/ulib/item/UKR0002001>

educational and literary and artistic relations of the late 18-th and early 20-th centuries are explored; O. A. Omelchenko¹ are being investigated ethnopsychological aspects of the interaction between Ukrainians and French; in the scientific works of V. G. Andriychuk² and V. Sokolov³, the socio-political aspect of Ukrainian-French relations, their history and modernity in the light of European and Euro-Atlantic integration are explored; V. D. Shynkaruk⁴ strategic communications in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war; The works of E. V. Donchenko⁵ explore the economic problems of the development of Ukrainian-French cooperation, the impact of globalization processes on the French economy, and lessons for Ukraine.

Goal: research of this section of the monograph is the study of new trends in the problem of interaction of the state, society, culture and language using the example of Ukraine, analysis of filling the concept of Francophonie with content, definition of development strategies of Ukraine in the space of Francophonie.

Methods

The study of Francophonie requires a comprehensive approach, since it is at the same time a cultural-anthropological, historical, sociological and political-ideological phenomenon. That is why the historical method will be useful, since Ukrainian-French relations cannot be considered outside of the historical context. A systemic method that will help to look at Francophonie as a living system. The method of discourse analysis, or critical discourse analysis, will immerse the understanding of the interaction of the state, society, culture and language, the concept of Francophonie in the historical context. The comparative method will provide an opportunity to compare different types of relations between Ukraine and France, to analyze identical and different trends.

Results and Discussion

The term “Francophonie” was proposed at the end of the 19th century, by geographer O. Reclus, who understood it as the sum of geographical territories and did not suspect the brilliant future of this concept. The new meaning of the word was formulated in the early 60s by Leopold Sédar Senghor – a thinker and public figure. This happened on the wave of independence of African countries, whose young leaders, including Leopold Senghor (Senegal), Habib Bourguiba (Tunisia),

¹ Omelchenko, O. A. (2024). Ethnopsychological aspects of the interaction of Ukrainians and French. Scientific works of the Interregional Academy of Personnel Management. *Political Science and Public Administration*, 1 (44), 48–53. URL: <https://journals.maup.com.ua/index.php/political/article/view/3441>

² Andriychuk V. G. (2023) Eurasian Doctrine and Results of Its Gradualistic Implementation as a Statement of Serious Challenges for Ukraine / V. G. Andriychuk, E. I. Ivanov. *Current Problems of International Relations*, 116 (2), P. 3–10.

³ Sokolov V. Yu. (2009). Ukraine–France: socio-political, economic and cultural-educational relations / V. Yu. Sokolov. *Viche*. Kyiv. 22, 45–62. URL: <https://veche.kiev.ua/journal/1742/>

⁴ Shynkaruk V. D. (2023). Strategic communications in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Food and environmental security in the context of war and post-war reconstruction: challenges for Ukraine and the world: mat. Int. scientific-practical conference, section 4: Quality of education and humanities in the context of war and global challenges (Kyiv, May 25, 2023). Kyiv. P. 358.

⁵ Donchenko E. V. (2021). Ukrainian-French interstate relations: main stages, directions and problems : dissertation ... candidate of historical sciences. Kyiv. 216 p.

Khamani Dior (Niger), had to build new relations with France. The first definition of Francophonie was given by Leopold Senghor himself L. S.Senghor (1988)⁶:

1. A set of states, countries and regions where the French language is used as a national language, as a language of international communication, work and culture.
2. The community of people who use French in these functions.
3. The spiritual community as a result of this use.

The modern meanings of the term retain all these aspects. There is also an understanding of Francophonie as an institution – the International Organization of Francophonie – unites French-speaking countries and countries that speak other languages. It has a developed structure that includes administrative, socio-political, cultural and educational bodies.

Finally, the term “Francophonie” refers to the group of people who use the French language for communication purposes. No other multinational community of people united by a single language has yet paid such attention to language and culture as the Francophonie. The uniqueness of this phenomenon is perhaps explained by the special understanding of language and language policy formed in France and inherited by French-speaking countries.

The development of the term in our time has reached the level where it is beginning to be considered a concept, according to P. Dale, French ambassador to Brazil and researcher: “The originality of the concept of Francophonie is based on the assertion that the shortest path to a universal beginning is not associated with a single financial market, but with the recognition of... the specificity of different cultural identities”. Such an understanding is due to the breadth and depth of associative ties that characterize the idea of Francophonie, and emotional assessment. At the same time, it is necessary to note the powerful political component of this phenomenon, the political will that led to the establishment of Francophonie (the role of Charles de Gaulle) and the functioning of the International Organization (Algeria, for example, is not a member of it, Tunisia and Morocco are members P. Dahlet (2010)⁷. If, following some authors, we distinguish between the concepts of “concept” (the result of the classification of natural phenomena and human observations) and “construct” (the result of human actions and will) Nancy-Combes-P. (2023)⁸, then the phenomenon of Francophonie does not belong to the first, but to the second concept. The question of whether this political project of cultural pluralism, in our opinion, still remains open.

French is the 5th most spoken language in the world, with 300 million speakers, or over 4% of the world’s population (one in 26). Of these, 235 million (3% of the

⁶ Senghor L. S. (1988). Ce que je crois : Negritude, Francite et Civilisation de l’Univer-sel. Paris. P. 157–158 [in French]. URL: https://documentation.insp.gouv.fr/insp/doc/SYRACUSE/116482/ce-que-je-crois-negritude-francite-et-civilisation-de-l-universel-leopold-sedar-senghor?_lg=fr-FR

⁷ Dahlet P. (2010). A la veille de Montreux : quels pactes en langues? *Le français à l’université*, 3, 3. (in French). URL: <https://www.axl.cefano.ulaval.ca/francophonie/Montreux-2010-declaration.htm>

⁸ Nancy-Combes J.-P. (2023). Pratiques, illusion ontologique et recherches en didactique des langues. Les Après-midi de LAIRDIL. 2010. *Didactique des langues, didactique des sciences*, 17, 33–46 [in French] (hal-01432131)

population, or one in 32) use it on a daily basis. French is, along with English, the only language spoken on all continents.

The role and place of French in the economy and trade: 3rd place among the languages of business communication after English and Chinese; 2nd place among the most used languages of economic relations after German and before Spanish, Arabic and Chinese, according to British businesses; the French-speaking area accounts for 14 % of inward FDI (foreign direct investment) and 15.3 % of outward FDI in the world.

French is studied all over the world: it is the 2nd most popular foreign language in the world after English, on five continents and in almost every country in the world. 125 million people in the world study or are studying French, of whom 51 million study it as a foreign language. Their number is growing by +6 % every year. Despite a slight decline in Europe, French remains the first language studied in English-speaking countries and second in German-speaking territories.

French is particularly popular in areas such as trade relations, commerce, international organizations (governmental and non-governmental), hospitality and tourism, translation and teleservice platforms with French-speaking countries, as well as information and communication technologies. French is certainly an additional advantage when looking for a job O. Kosovych (2010)¹.

The International Organization of La Francophonie (hereinafter referred to as the IOF) was established in 1970 in Niamey (Niger) on the initiative of Presidents L. Senghor (Senegal), H. Diiori (Niger) and H. Bourguiba (Tunisia) and with the assistance of Prince N. Sihanouk (Cambodia) and French President J. Pompidou under the name Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. In 2005, the Organization was renamed the International Organization of La Francophonie.

The main mission of the Organization is to promote the development of diverse cooperation between fully or partially French-speaking countries of the world. The scope of interests of the IOF is quite broad and, in addition to linguistic and cultural issues, includes such topical areas of international cooperation as: strengthening peace and security, conflict prevention; development of democratic institutions, protection of human rights; ensuring sustainable development in the context of globalization; expansion of economic and technical cooperation, etc.

The IOF includes 54 full members, 3 countries are Associate Members, 23 countries have observer status, including Ukraine.

The highest forum of the IOF is the conference (summit) of heads of state and government of the Francophonie countries. It is held once every two years. The summits discuss the most important issues of economic, political and cultural cooperation and adopt a Declaration and Action Plan. During the summit and in the period leading up to the next summit, the IOF is chaired by the head of state or government of the host country.

¹ Kosovych O. V. (2010). French language in the Francophonie space: monograph / Kosovych Olha. Ternopil : FOP Osadtsa Yu. V. 211 p. URL: <https://ru.scribd.com/document/599309475/Kosovuch-O-Monograf-fr>

The Ministerial Conference of La Francophonie (Ministerial Conference of La Francophonie – IOF), established in 1991, ensures political continuity of the Organization's activities between summits. It is chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the host country of the summit, whose term of office extends for one year before the summit and one year after it.

The Permanent Council of La Francophonie (PCLF) is a permanent institutional and political body of the IOF, to which each IOF member country appoints its official representative. The main task of the Council is to prepare and hold IOF summits, ensure the implementation of the decisions of the summits and ministerial conferences.

This IOF body includes personal representatives of the heads of state and government of countries that have the status of a full member, associate member, or observer in the IOF.

Given that the IOF headquarters is located in Paris, personal representatives to the PCLF are usually appointed by the Ambassadors of the respective member countries in France (including Ukraine) and/or, in combination, by the permanent representatives of these countries to international organizations headquartered in Paris (UNESCO, OECD).

The Secretary General of the IOF, who is the main executive officer of the Organization and has the status of an international official, chairs the Permanent Council of the Francophonie and manages the current work of the IOF Secretariat.

Ukraine received observer status in the International Organization of the Francophonie during the XI Summit of the IOF on September 28–29, 2006 in Bucharest.

Ukraine's accession to the IOF was welcomed by its other members, who regarded this step of our state as a serious manifestation of its desire to develop broad international cooperation, primarily with African countries and the European Union, both on a bilateral basis and within the framework of international organizations.

Membership in the IOF gave Ukraine the opportunity to diversify channels of cooperation in the areas of the development of democratic institutions, modernization of educational processes, participation in the dialogue of cultures, and also to strengthen our positions in international organizations where the countries of the French-speaking community are widely represented.

Ukraine highly appreciates the activities of the IOF in the development of democracy, maintaining peace and stability in the world, and promoting cultural and linguistic diversity. Ukraine's membership in this Organization is seen as evidence of awareness of its important and significant role in overcoming modern challenges at the global and regional levels.

Ukraine's membership in the International Organization of La Francophonie as an observer gives our country the opportunity to be represented at a high level at ministerial conferences and summits of the Francophonie and to conduct targeted political and diplomatic work to promote Ukraine's interests in all areas of the IOF's competence, including at the bilateral level.

In addition, our country's participation in the Organization's activities is seen as another confirmation of Ukraine's commitment to democratic values, as evidence of Ukraine's active international position, readiness to play an important role in strengthening democracy, protecting human rights, and ensuring sustainable development of countries and regions.

Ukraine is ready to take an active part in the diverse activities of the IOF and to contribute to the implementation of the main tasks of the international agenda – political, economic, environmental, humanitarian or security.

The International Day of La Francophonie is traditionally celebrated on March 20. In fact, it is the day of the French language, which has become a cultural event for many member states and observers of the international organization La Francophonie. The structure positions itself not only as an organization of a cultural nature, but also as an institution that promotes democracy, respect for cultural diversity and peace.

Although La Francophonie is primarily a language community, it is increasingly promoting the development of cooperation between its members in areas that are not directly related to the French language, such as culture and education. It is also about increasingly active economic exchanges. It is appropriate to trace the main stages of Ukrainian-French socio-political relations, as well as Ukrainian-French ties in the scientific, educational, and artistic spheres.

Modern Ukrainian-French relations are the result of a centuries-old history of their development V. Sokolov (2009)¹. The first Ukrainian-French ties date back to the 11th century, when King Henry I married Anna, daughter of Prince Yaroslav the Wise of Kiev, on May 19, 1051. After the king's death in 1060, Queen Anna was regent for the reign of her young son Philip. She later became the Countess of Valois-Crépy and founded a monastery near Paris.

After the Tatar invasion of 1240, Rus'-Ukraine turned to Western European countries for help. In 1245, Metropolitan Peter took part in the Council of Lyon and asked for help in the fight against the Tatars. In 1246, Pope Innocent IV sent his legate Carpini from Lyon to the khan, who also traveled through the lands of Ukraine, which he reported on in his correspondence.

From the beginning of the 16th century, French government and diplomatic circles, as well as individual researchers, were interested in the Cossack movement and the campaigns of the Cossacks against Turkey, the Crimea and Poland. The first information about the Cossacks appeared in France in 1531. French descriptions of the Ukrainian lands date back to the 16th century. The logical consequence of the Mongol-Tatar invasion, which undermined the political and economic power of Kievan Rus-Ukraine and led to the growth of the role of the Moscow land, was the Moscow orientation of the eastern vector of French foreign policy. Only in the 17th century, with the strengthening of the Zaporizhian Sich and the expansion of its influence over a significant part of Left-Bank and Right-Bank Ukraine, did French

¹ Sokolov V. Yu. (2009). Ukraine–France: socio-political, economic and cultural-educational relations. *Viche*. Kyiv. 22, 45–62. URL: <https://veche.kiev.ua/journal/1742/>

diplomats and politicians again begin to single out our country as a potential subject of international relations.

The French government was informed about the affairs of the Cossacks by its ambassadors in Constantinople and Warsaw, travelers in Eastern Europe, as well as special informants.

Contacts were established with Hetman Petro Sahaidachny.

Diplomatic relations between Ukraine and France intensified with the beginning of the national liberation movement in Ukraine in the middle of the 17th century. Thus, the first special work on Ukraine and the Cossacks, "Description de l'Ukraine" ("Description of the Ukrainian Lands") (1650), was written by the French engineer and military cartographer Guillaume Levasseur de Beauplan, who, working in the Polish service, was in Ukraine from 1631 to 1647. V. Sichynsky (1992)².

Bogdan Khmelnytsky's war of 1648–1657 and the Cossack state he created deeply interested France. Later in their policy, the French were in favor of an agreement between the Cossacks and Poland, but against the rapprochement of Ukraine with the Muscovite state. In general, in the 17th century, official French policy regarding Ukrainian affairs was under strong Polish influence and therefore works that covered issues of Eastern European foreign policy relations, as a rule, reflected the point of view of Polish interests.

In the late 17th – early 18th centuries, a new distribution of forces was established in Europe: Poland declined, and against the Russian-Prussian alliance a Franco-Swedish one was created, and the Ottoman Empire also gravitated towards the latter. France contributed to the strengthening of the Hetmanate's aspirations for independence. French diplomacy favorably treated the actions of Hetman Ivan Mazepa and helped conclude a Ukrainian-Swedish alliance. After the Poltava defeat (1709), French diplomats increased their influence on the Porte so that it would not betray Mazepa and the Mazepinites to the Tsar.

The ruin of the Ukrainian-Cossack state did not immediately lead to the curtailment of active Ukrainian-French contacts. The reason for this is France's understanding of Ukraine's separateness even under Moscow's supremacy. This is evidenced, for example, by the report of the French envoy in Istanbul, Friol, who, explaining Mazepa's Poltava decision, wrote: "The Cossacks are not natural subjects of the tsar, they only submitted to his protectorate and no one can blame them for the fact that, seeing their freedoms being destroyed, they rebelled".

Hetman of Ukraine in exile Pylyp Orlyk placed special hopes precisely on France's interest in organizing an anti-Moscow coalition. An active role in the efforts to form such a coalition was played by the hetman's son, a French count, Marshal of France, politician and diplomat, member of the royal secret council, Hryhoriy Orlyk.

In the 18th century, Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovsky, developing ideas for the revival of the Ukrainian state and culture, also sought support from France. It was this development of Ukrainian-French relations in the 17th-18th centuries that allowed

² Sichynsky V. (1992). *Foreigners about Ukraine*. Kyiv. 254 p. URL: https://chtyvo.org.ua/authors/Sichynskiy_Volodymyr/Chuzhyntsi_pro_Ukrainu_vyd_1991/

Napoleon I to plan the creation of two Ukrainian states in Left-Bank Ukraine under the protectorate of France. But the defeat of Napoleon I also destroyed his plans. France gradually cooled to the idea of Ukrainian independence. In the 19th-early 20th centuries. France's position on the Ukrainian issue can be characterized as political indifference. What can not be said about Ukrainian-French relations in the scientific, educational and artistic spheres O. A.Ivanenko (2009)¹.

At the end of the 18th – in the first half of the 19th century. Ukrainian topics became an integral part of the scientific, journalistic, and artistic life of France. The influence of the ideology of the Enlightenment led to an increase in the interest of representatives of the French intellectual elite in the democratic traditions inherent in the socio-political life of the Cossacks, for them the Cossacks were the embodiment of a desperate struggle for freedom. Investigating the problems of the historical confrontation between the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe, French scientists assigned a key role in it to the Ukrainian Cossacks. In the public consciousness of the French, parallels arose between the Cossacks and the democratic heritage of Antiquity, the military feat of medieval chivalry.

The development of historiography in France in the first half of the 19th century. was determined by the ideology of Romanticism. Ukrainian history became a fertile ground for French scholars who were looking for manifestations of uniqueness, individuality, “national color”, “soul of the people” in the past. Thus, the romantic ideological trend gave impetus to the development of Western European studies of folklore and ethnography of Ukraine. Thanks to French ethnographic works, which contained a comparative characteristic of the ethnographic and mental characteristics of Ukrainians and Russians, an image of a distinctive Ukrainian people emerged in the minds of European peoples.

When determining the subject of their own research, representatives of the romantic direction of historiography, as a rule, preferred heroic events of the past, as well as strong individuals capable of determining the course of history. Most often, French authors turned in their works to the figures of Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Ivan Mazepa. Through the efforts of historians, writers, and publicists, the images of Ukrainian hetmans were established in French public opinion as symbols of resistance to despotism and the titanic desire for freedom and independence.

An important prerequisite for the intensification of Ukrainian-French spiritual and cultural mutual influences was the growth of French immigration to Ukraine, characteristic of the second half of the 18-th century, due to the state policy of the Russian government. The reasons for supporting foreign immigration at the state level were primarily related to the economic and strategic tasks that the tsarist government faced on the path of economic and social integration into the Russian Empire of the recently annexed territories in the Northern Black Sea Region and Crimea.

¹ Ivanenko O. A. (2009). Ukrainian-French relations: science, education, art (late 18th-early 20-th centuries). Kyiv : Institute of History of Ukraine, NAS of Ukraine, 2009. URL: <https://irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/ulib/item/UKR0002001>

The active participation of the French in the Western European colonization of the Russian Empire was due to the complication of the socio-economic situation in France as a result of the Seven Years' War (1756–63), the aggravation of political instability during the Great French Revolution of the late 18th century. After the military campaign of Napoleon I in 1812, French prisoners of war remained on the territory of the Russian state, including in Ukraine, and accepted Russian citizenship.

Immigrants from France played an important role in the economic development of the Northern Black Sea Region and Crimea in the late 18th and first half of the 19th centuries. By investing their capital in the development of the Black Sea-Mediterranean trade, French merchants contributed to the process of including Southern Ukraine in the system of international economic relations, which was significantly slowed down due to the presence of significant Russian-Turkish and Russian-French contradictions. The economic losses caused by the outflow of Tatars from Crimea after its accession to the Russian Empire were partially compensated by the agricultural colonization of the French, who brought their own traditions of animal husbandry and agriculture to the region.

French immigration became one of the main factors in the formation of Odessa as an influential economic and cultural center of the European model. The name of the highly educated French aristocrat, brilliant military officer Armand-Emmanuel Richelieu du Plessis, who held the position of Odessa mayor (1803–1805) and Novorossiysk governor-general (1805–1814), is closely associated with the history of the city. Under his leadership, architectural development was carried out in Odessa, in the design and implementation of which French specialists played a significant role. The work initiated by Richelieu in the field of economic and social and cultural life of Southern Ukraine was continued by his successor Louis Alexandre Andre Langeron, thanks to whom new examples of landscape and architectural art were created in Odessa. A newspaper was opened, printed in French, and educational institutions were founded, in which the traditions of the Western European education system were widely used. In the professional composition of French immigrants, a large share belonged to cultural figures – teachers (governors, private teachers, teachers of secondary and higher educational institutions), architects, actors, musicians. Their presence on Ukrainian lands played the role of a factor that contributed to the integration of national culture into the European intellectual space.

At the end of the 18th and beginning of the 20th centuries. the development of Ukrainian-French cultural relations was determined by a number of factors, an important place among which was occupied by the realities of the then system of international relations. The intensification of fierce competition with England in the trade and economic sphere led to the growth of interest of French ruling circles at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries. in asserting the interests of their country in the Northern Black Sea region, in the development of Black Sea-Mediterranean trade. The reasons for France's desire to gain control over the southern Ukrainian market were not limited to purely economic calculations, because consolidation in the region gave the French the opportunity to strengthen the

geopolitical and strategic positions of their state, to strengthen its influence in Europe and the Middle East.

During the second half of the 18-th century, the opening of new Black Sea-Azov ports contributed to the rapid growth of foreign trade operations in Southern Ukraine. An important role in their implementation was played by French merchants, who founded firms in the trading centers of Southern Ukraine that specialized in importing alcoholic beverages, fruits, fabrics, luxury items to the Russian Empire and exporting local agricultural products, the demand for which was growing in Europe. French merchants were intermediaries in the supply of Ukrainian bread to Italy and Spain. Foreign merchants interested in stimulating demand for French goods contributed to the establishment of elements of Western European culture in the everyday life of Ukrainians. In France itself, the awareness of the practical importance of expanding French-Ukrainian trade relations actualized the development of research into the economic potential of Ukraine.

The intensification of the political confrontation between Russia and France was accompanied by a growing interest of the French ruling circles in Ukraine, which occupied an important place in the system of foreign policy projects of revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Interest in Ukraine in French public and cultural life increased during the Crimean War (1853–1856) between the Russian Empire and the coalition consisting of Great Britain, France, Turkey, Sardinia for dominance in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East. The Ukrainian theme gained resonance in France in the context of condemnation of Russian expansionism and the actualization of the issue of the “Russian threat” to Europe. In the last third of the 19-th century, significant transformations took place in French foreign policy. As a result of the change in France’s foreign policy, unfavorable socio-political conditions developed within the country for objective coverage of Ukrainian topics. In general, the French media adhered to a Russophile policy, keeping quiet about the national problems of the Russian Empire, O. A.Ivanenko (2009)¹.

In the first half of the 19th century, immigrants from France – a country with ancient pedagogical traditions – made a significant contribution to the establishment and development of Kharkiv University (1804), the Richelieu Lyceum (1817), the Nizhyn Gymnasium of Higher Sciences (1820), and Kyiv University (1834). The main forms of scientific cooperation between France and Ukraine in the 19th and early 20-th centuries can be classified as follows: improvement of education by domestic specialists in French scientific centers; collection of materials by them in France for independent research; publication of their works in French scientific publications; joint research work with Western European colleagues; teaching in French educational institutions; exchange of scientific information, equipment, and museum exhibits.

During the period under review, Ukrainian-French scientific ties in the fields of philology, history, law, and natural sciences were clearly evident. The basis for

¹ Ivanenko O. A. (2009) Ukrainian-French relations: science, education, art (late 18th-early 20-th centuries). Kyiv : Institute of History of Ukraine, NAS of Ukraine, 2009. URL: <https://irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/ulib/item/UKR0002001>

their development was the opening of universities in Ukraine, which played the role of centers of science and education, which influenced the state of secondary schools through training personnel, the development of curricula and manuals by professors, and also participated in the formation of public opinion through the active public activity of scientists. The borrowing of European traditions initiated during the Middle Ages, which provided for administrative autonomy, the principles of freedom of teaching and scientific research, can be traced in the statutes of 1804 and 1863, which regulated university life in the Russian Empire.

In the 19-th and early 20-th centuries, the development of science and education in Ukraine took place in the context of those historical realities that were determined by the lack of its own statehood, the presence of most of the Ukrainian lands as part of the Russian Empire. The opening of the universities of Kharkiv (1804), Kyiv (1834), and Novorossiysk (1865) was dictated primarily by the strategic goals of tsarism: strengthening its economic and geopolitical positions in the region, and establishing the indivisibility of the Russian state. However, the universities, designed to provide a basis for the development of the ideological foundations of autocracy, objectively transformed into centers of scientific research and educational work, which successfully integrated into the pan-European cultural space.

As a result of the defeat in the Crimean War (1853–1856), the decline in Russia's authority in the international arena, the need for social reforms and improvement of the education system became particularly urgent. The problems of providing higher education with qualified scientific and pedagogical personnel, scientific literature, textbooks, and insufficient awareness of domestic scientists with the latest developments of leading Western European scientific schools became obvious. The 1863 statute, which provided for the restoration of the autonomy of the teaching corporation, gave universities the right to send scientists abroad for training for professorial work.

The quantitative and qualitative growth of scientific discoveries, the accumulation of theoretical knowledge in Europe during the 19th and early 20-th centuries, caused the need for information exchange, the introduction of unified measurement standards in the field of technical sciences, the introduction of international coordination of research, joint research work, and discussions. It became obvious that the limitation of the development of science by national borders inevitably led to its regression. It was in the second half of the 19-th – early 20-th centuries, international scientific cooperation of Kharkiv, Kyiv and Novorossiysk universities gained dynamic development, and one of the leading places in it was occupied by France. The factor of the progressive development of higher educational institutions of Ukraine was the synthesis of knowledge and methods borrowed by domestic scientists in French scientific and educational institutions: the College de France, the Sorbonne, as well as the School of Charters, the Practical School of Higher Knowledge, the Independent School of Political Sciences, the School of Law, etc. The development of the university system in Ukraine had pan-European significance, because the discoveries of M. D. Pylchykov, I. I. Mechnikov, the creative achievements of M. P. Dragomanov,

D. I. Kachenovsky, V. S. Ikonnikov, I. V. Luchytsky, etc. enriched world science and significantly influenced the course of its historical development.

The Ukrainian public was introduced to the spiritual achievements of France by the activities of domestic writers. The worldview of G. S. Skovoroda reflected the humanistic pedagogical views of J.-J. Rousseau regarding free and nature-appropriate education. Under the influence of Rousseau's works "Reflections on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among People" (1755) and "The Social Contract" (1762), Ya.P. Kozelsky became fascinated by the cult of the "natural state" of humanity and the theory of the social contract. The spread of the ideas of the French Enlightenment in Ukraine and the Europeanization of everyday life in Slobozhanshchyna was facilitated by the activities of O. O. Palitsyn, around whom at the beginning of the 19-th century a circle of supporters of Western European literature and education united, which is mentioned in the letters of contemporaries under the name "Popov Academy". Characteristic of the early period of P. P.'s literary career Hulak-Artemovsky's appeal to French classicism influenced his subsequent work in the Ukrainian language. The Kobzar's memoir and epistolary heritage, his prose works testify to the author's familiarity with the work of French philosophers-enlighteners and such writers as P.-J. Béranger, O. Barbier, Fenelon, F.-R. Chateaubriand, and others.

The development of Ukrainian culture in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries was characterized by its deepening involvement in the pan-European literary process, which was characterized by close inter-ethnic ties and mutual influences. Philosophical ideas, aesthetic and ethical concepts of France influenced the worldviews of domestic artists, and the images and motifs of French literature were reflected in their work. The enrichment of Ukrainian literature was facilitated by the translation activities of Mark Vovchka, P. A. Grabovsky, Lesya Ukrainka, V. I. Samiyenko, M. P. Starytsky, which made the works of J.-B. Moliere, P.-O. Beaumarchais, J. de Staël, P.-J. Béranger, V. Hugo, O. Barbier, C. Baudelaire, Erkmann-Chatrian, J. Verne, A. Daudet, E. Zola, A. France, P. Verlaine and others. The ideas developed by Western European writers were not simply assimilated by Ukrainian literature, they were subjected to analysis, comprehension, and interpretation by domestic authors who studied and evaluated works of French literature, reflecting in their literary and critical works the current problems of the social and cultural life of Europe at that time, O. A. Ivanenko (2009)¹.

The popularization of masterpieces of Western art in Ukrainian territories, the replenishment of domestic culture with new artistic trends and genres, and its integration into the European cultural space were facilitated by Ukrainian-French theatrical relations of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Due to the influence of French culture, vaudeville, comedies, operettas, and melodramas received general recognition in Ukraine. International artistic ties led to the intensification of the development of Ukrainian culture: domestic dramaturgy was enriched with original adaptations

¹ Ivanenko O. A. (2009) Ukrainian-French relations: science, education, art (late 18th-early 20-th centuries). Kyiv : Institute of History of Ukraine, NAS of Ukraine, 2009. URL: <https://irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/ulib/item/UKR0002001>

and translations of French plays, and there were more works of popular genres written by Ukrainian authors. The spread of European cultural heritage in Ukraine and the establishment of new artistic principles were facilitated by tours of foreign professional artists and amateurs. Performances by French theater groups became an important tool for Ukrainian viewers to learn about this European country and its spiritual life. In the second half of the 19th century, theatrical ties between the two nations expanded, but the mutual influence of French and Ukrainian art was not equal. The development of culture in Ukraine, which was part of the Russian Empire, was exposed to the Russification policy of the tsarist government. One of its manifestations was the Ems Act of 1876, which prohibited stage performances, readings, and printing of texts for musical scores in Ukrainian. Strict censorship control over artistic life hindered the formation of a professional Ukrainian theater and limited the access of domestic viewers to the cultural heritage of France. Productions of plays by Western European authors translated into Ukrainian became possible in the Russian Empire only after the revolution of 1905. However, an analysis of the main trends of Ukrainian-French theatrical relations allows us to conclude that at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, elements of mutual enrichment and adequate exchange of cultural heritage emerged in their structure.

The influence of French culture contributed to the formation and progressive development, enrichment of Ukrainian fine art of the 19th and early 20-th centuries. The stay of domestic painters in such prestigious institutions as the Paris Academy of Arts, the Julien Academy of Painting and Sculpture, the Colorossi and Cormon studios, the La Palette art school was a guarantee of their obtaining a quality education, familiarization with the latest artistic trends and movements. The study of the collections of French museums by Ukrainian artists became an important component of the formation of their aesthetic tastes, ideological and artistic guidelines. The growth of the professional level of domestic art was evidenced by the reflection in it of cultural phenomena of a pan-European scale and the worthy participation of artists and sculptors from Ukraine in the artistic life of France.

During the First World War, in order not to weaken its ally – Russia, France bypassed the Ukrainian question, and since 1916 The French government banned the distribution in France of the magazine “La revue ukrainienne”, which was published in Lausanne as an organ of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine. Only after the “February Revolution” of 1917, with the second revival of the Ukrainian state – the proclamation of the Ukrainian People’s Republic, did Ukrainian-French political relations begin to revive again. The French government began to closely monitor the work of the Central Rada. The subsequent implementation of the idea of the independence of the Ukrainian People’s Republic through participation in the Brest Peace Treaty and especially the rapprochement of the Ukrainian state of Hetman Skoropadsky with Germany not only led to a certain distance between Ukraine and the Entente, but also so complicated the international situation of the UNR that the Entente as a whole, and France in particular, placed a bet on relations with Denikin and other Russian-White Guard leaders and even did not allow the UNR to fully

participate in the Paris Peace Conference. This development of events became one of the reasons for the victory of Bolshevism in Ukraine, a new defeat of the idea of Ukrainian statehood, and another division of Ukrainian lands, now between Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bolshevik Russia.

Since 1917, a lot of French-language literature about Ukraine has appeared, in which French political and scientific figures have spoken favorably of the cause of the restoration of Ukrainian statehood. Among others, P. Chal published the article "La question ukrainienne et le principe des nationalités" ("The Ukrainian question and the beginning of citizenship") in the magazine "Le Monde Slave"; the director of the French Institute in Petrograd L. Reau published a report at the meeting of the Society of Russia "La République indépendante de l'Ukraine" ("The Ukrainian independent republic"); the prominent French Slavist L. Leger published in the "Revue hebdomadaire" on October 26, 1918 a favorable article for Ukraine "L'Ukraine, son passé, son avenir" ("Ukraine, its past and future"); a teacher of French in Kyiv, S. Dubreuil, wrote his memoirs "Deux années en Ukraine. 1917–1919" ("Two Years in Ukraine"). The Ukrainian Studies Circle in Paris published a brochure by Fyodor Savchenko "L'Ukraine et la question ukrainienne" ("Ukraine and the Ukrainian Question") (1918). With the support of Slav supporters E. Denis and A. Tom, a political representation of the Ukrainian National Council was founded in Paris under the leadership of F. Savchenko and Ya. Ekzemplyarsky A. Zlenko¹.

Ukrainian-French relations since August 24, 1991 have become one of the priority areas of its foreign policy. This is confirmed by the Paris meeting of October 3, 1991, between the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Leonid Kravchuk and the President of the French Republic François Mitterrand. Although only after the ratification of the Agreement of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine on the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on December 8, 1991, with the de facto termination of the existence of the USSR as a subject of international law, France, and the world community as a whole, began to perceive a sovereign and independent Ukraine as a valid subject of international law, as a geopolitical reality. On December 21, 1991, France recognized Ukraine, and on January 24, 1992, full diplomatic relations were established between our states V. Sokolov (2009)².

The Treaty on Mutual Assistance and Cooperation between Ukraine and the French Republic, signed in Paris on June 16, 1992, and the Declaration of France of December 5, 1994 on Ukraine's Security Guarantees played a significant role in the development of modern Ukrainian-French relations, strengthening Ukraine's international positions and authority. Under President Jacques Chirac (1995–2007), the French government's attitude towards Ukraine (in the context of the gas issue) gave priority to Russian-French relations, because our state at that time was still viewed through the prism of relations with Russia. The French authorities had not yet taken into account that

¹ Ukraine and France: essays on the centuries-old history of relations / A. Zlenko et al. Lviv: Svitlo i tin, 2011. P. 29.

² Sokolov V. Yu. (2009). Ukraine–France: socio-political, economic and cultural-educational relations / V. Yu. Sokolov. *Viche*. Kyiv. 22, 45–62 [in Ukrainian]. URL: <https://veche.kiev.ua/journal/1742/>

the great Soviet empire no longer existed, and the new republics were full members of international relations. The Russian Federation remained the embodiment of the USSR, and the new independent states were only temporary formations on the way to creating a “new” united state.

In the negotiation process for the conclusion of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, Ukraine’s intentions were to clearly define in this agreement the European perspective of membership in the organization, as well as to emphasize the importance of including in the text of the agreement fundamentally new elements that, on the one hand, would significantly distinguish the future agreement from other association agreements signed by the EU with North African countries, and on the other hand, would justify the need to provide Ukraine with the prospect of membership in the organization. Over the past few years, Ukraine’s future membership in the European Union has gone from a distant goal to a real prospect. Russian aggression has brought the positions of Ukraine and the EU closer together than ever before. Brussels is unable to resolve the general issue of security in Europe without the citizens of Ukraine. The partnership has acquired enormous proportions, and mutual integration has accelerated many times over. The EU is helping Ukraine in repelling Russian aggression.

Regarding the prospects of Ukraine’s relations with NATO, France adheres to the principles of “open doors” and gradualism in promoting integration progress towards the alliance. N. Sarkozy stated that Ukraine “has a calling” to join NATO, there is no political problem in this, it is only about their political readiness for this and the terms of future accession. Thus, the essence of the processes of transformation of French foreign policy was determined by the President of this state, Nicolas Sarkozy, who characterized it as “a certain gap” (with the policy of the previous administration), which fits into a holistic consistent idea of the place and role of France in the world. Therefore, although cooperation improved after the changes in the ruling elite in Ukraine and France, it did not change significantly. France perceives Ukraine as a member of the EU, but only if the latter is ready to join.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and the annexation of Crimea have forced Paris to pay closer attention to Ukraine. France became one of the participants in the “Normandy Four” – a format in which Ukraine, France and Germany tried to find a diplomatic way to force Russia to return control of the occupied part of Donbas to Ukraine. The result of their joint work was the Minsk agreements, which were never fully implemented.

Despite strong criticism of these agreements from many Ukrainian politicians, former French President Francois Hollande (2012–2017), who was a direct participant in those negotiations, believes that the respite benefited Ukraine. “Since 2014, Ukraine has strengthened its military capabilities. Indeed, the Ukrainian army was not at all the same as in 2014. It was better trained and equipped. The merit of the Minsk agreements is that they provided the Ukrainian army with this opportunity”, said Francois Hollande in an interview with Kyiv Independent on December 28, 2022.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has completely changed the relationship between Kyiv and Paris, opening a new chapter in Ukrainian-French relations. The reaction of the current French President Emmanuel Macron (since 2017) to the shock of seeing images of bombing and Russian tank columns crossing the Ukrainian border was immediate. "It is President Putin, having rejected one after another all the obligations he made to the world community, who deliberately chose war by his unilateral decision. This war is not a conflict between NATO and the West on the one hand and Russia on the other, as some write: there are no NATO troops or bases on the territory of Ukraine. This is a lie. Russia is not being attacked. It is the aggressor... This war is the result of revanchism, which, in its desire to plunge Europe back into the darkest times of empires, conquests, and mass murders, is fueled by a revisionist reading of the history of our continent", Macron said on March 2, 2022. France immediately froze over 20 billion euros in assets of the Central Bank of Russia and seized the assets of some Russian oligarchs. France was one of the first to begin supplying Ukraine with long-range artillery systems, wheeled tanks, and, together with the United Kingdom, long-range SCALP missiles.

In a few years, Ukraine has become critically important for France, not only in the context of the direct Russian military threat in Europe. Russia, with the help of its military campaign, has been undermining French influence in the African region for several years, in countries that were formerly French colonies (Burkina Faso, Mali, the Central African Republic, Niger). By helping Ukraine, France is solving several geopolitical tasks at once. On the one hand, it ensures security in Europe, and on the other, it deters Russia from further expansion in Africa. This creates the prerequisites for further strengthening of the Ukrainian-French partnership.

Now we can safely say that France has transformed from a mere partner into an ally of Ukraine. Since the declaration of Ukrainian independence, France has maintained an intensive level of relations in military and defense cooperation with our state. The goal of cooperation is to help Ukraine approach Euro-Atlantic structures. The aforementioned interaction is carried out in many areas:

- strategic dialogue between the ministries of defense (peacekeeping operations, reform of the armed forces, as well as situations in regional and global conflict zones and energy security issues);
- personnel training, including internships of cadets and officers in military educational institutions of Ukraine and France. All this is aimed at deepening the development of bilateral contacts and improving the necessary (in the case of joint operations) interaction between the armed forces;
- multinational exercises. France and Ukraine regularly participate in international exercises organized by NATO within the framework of the North Atlantic Alliance program called "Partnership for Peace";
- learning French in military institutes of Ukraine. Certain efforts are being made to learn French in military institutes. For this purpose, French language teachers regularly come to Ukraine. Educational and methodological support is also provided (French language teaching methods, methodological, audio and video materials are transferred to Ukrainian military institutes).

Within the Eastern dimension of the European cooperation policy, the issue of cooperation in the field of diversification of energy supply sources will become most relevant. In this context, it is important to emphasize the possible prospects for more active participation (in particular, financial) of the European Union in projects to modernize and increase the capacity of the Ukrainian gas transportation system. It could be relevant to focus attention on the feasibility of creating a secretariat (bureau, office) of the “Eastern Partnership”, which would contribute to a more effective implementation of this future EU policy.

Priority areas of trade and economic cooperation are nuclear energy, gas transportation, modernization of Ukrainian railways and creation of high-speed rail traffic, construction of highways, as well as re-equipment of the domestic aircraft fleet. The French side positively assesses the prospects for economic cooperation with Ukraine, taking into account its accession to the WTO, as well as the possible creation of a free trade area (FTA), which will expand our country’s opportunities to enter the EU internal market. Therefore, we can predict the strengthening of trade and economic cooperation between our countries in the coming years, primarily in the field of small and medium-sized businesses, given the possible creation of a free trade zone between Ukraine and the European Union.

The development of cultural cooperation within the framework of a multi-year program provided for the following main measures: holding Ukrainian cultural events in Paris, as well as annual festivals “French Spring in Ukraine”. It was declared that cooperation between higher education institutions of both countries would be carried out with the aim of mutual recognition of diplomas between Ukraine and France and joining our state to the Sorbonne-Bologna process. The aim of the educational dialogue is also, in particular, to increase the number of Ukrainian students studying in France by introducing joint master’s degrees according to European standards (in particular, in the field of European law), as well as Ukraine’s acquisition of observer status at the International Organization of La Francophonie and the expansion of French language teaching in Ukraine.

The French Institute in Ukraine (FIU) is the only foreign cultural institution open to the public in the capital of Ukraine. France has decided to keep open such instruments of diplomatic influence as the French Lycée named after Anne of Kyiv, the French Institute in Ukraine and a network of six *Alliances françaises*: in Kharkiv, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia (east), Odessa (south), Lviv, Rivne (west), all of which operate – some in a somewhat limited format – and offer distance learning courses.

The FIU retains a number of its original missions, including: teaching French and organizing exams and tests in French, a media library, promoting studies in France and providing scholarships to encourage university and scientific mobility, as well as popularizing French cinema. French language classes conducted by the Institute’s teachers are an essential activity of the institution. Although FIU was closed from February 24 to September 1, 2022, language students have been gradually returning since then. This is facilitated by differentiated teaching approaches in face-to-face, distance or blended formats, interactive teaching methods and modernized teaching materials, etc.

Regarding exams and tests in French, since the beginning of 2023, the FIU has organized DELF-DALF exams for 357 candidates from all over Ukraine, 248 of them in Kyiv. These figures are significantly higher than in 2022 (503 across Ukraine, including 232 in Kyiv), but they remain low compared to 2021, when 1,069 candidates (including 491 in Kyiv) received language certification. These figures are very indicative of the situation that needs to be taken into account, and which can be summarized as follows: a return to the pre-war situation in a short period of time is an illusion. In the city of Kyiv, which has probably lost a quarter to a sixth of its population, and where about 70 % of this number are people aged 18–40 (and this is the vast majority of our pre-war audience), the FIU must find a new growth model that is sufficiently different from the one that prevailed before the war. and support for young Ukrainian artists whose projects are part of French programs.

Despite the war, the French Institute in Ukraine attaches particular importance to encouraging Ukrainian artists to participate in the popular residency program in France. These are often decisive stages in their research and artistic creation, thanks to the studio provided for living and working, as well as the necessary financial, technical and human resources.

Cooperation in the field of books and the printed word was important even before the war, and is now one of the priorities of cooperation. This priority was discussed and approved at regular meetings between the two Ministers of Culture in Paris, Kyiv and Brussels.

In close contact with the two ministries, the French Institute in Ukraine has launched an ambitious project aimed at replenishing the funds of 24 regional libraries in Ukraine. For each of the 24 libraries, it is planned to transfer 200 books by French and Francophone authors in Ukrainian translation and 200 children's books published in Ukraine.

As part of its cultural and institutional cooperation, the FIU, together with the ALIPH Foundation (International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Zones) and the Kyiv City Council, is working on an ambitious joint project aimed at protecting works of art in 12 museums in the Ukrainian capital. In the context of the ongoing war, the preservation of exhibits in various museums is a priority for the Ukrainian side, and the Institute seeks to resolve this issue. Thanks to the funding from the ALIPH Foundation, the IFU will purchase a number of protective equipment for the main museums of Kyiv, in particular for the Museum of the History of Kyiv, the Kyiv Art Gallery, and the Kyiv Fortress Museum.

So, taking into account the context of the war, which significantly changes the conditions in which the institution operates, this concerns the policy on the printed and written word or professional internships for French language teachers, which are currently being conducted in France and Poland, since French specialists are not allowed to come to Ukraine. Ultimately, the Institute took into account the new priorities of Ukraine and launched new, completely unprecedented forms of cooperation. First of all, this concerns the coordination of training of Ukrainian judicial employees at the National School of Judges in France. These are also measures to protect works and artifacts in Ukrainian museums and professional internships for

museum experts and restorers in France. So, the FIU has adapted and strives to meet completely new priorities.

Conclusions

The term Francophonie was introduced in 1880 by the French geographer Onesimus Reclus to designate French-speaking people and countries. Since then, the term Francophonie has been used to refer to all French-speaking people, and the term Francophonie describes the institutional relations between Francophonie countries. At the institutional level, Francophonie appeared in 1970 with the creation of an association of countries, which today is called the “International Organization of Francophonie” (IOF). The main mission of the Organization is to popularize the French language and promote cooperation between 84 states or parts of states of the world that are members or observers of the IOF. Ukraine, in particular, has been an observer of Francophonie since 2006.

Ukraine’s choice of France as a priority partner is determined by the influential position of this country in the world and the European Union, as well as by the significant results of its economic, political, and socio-cultural development. Research into the potential of bilateral cooperation between partner countries, analysis of the efficiency of export-import operations between the countries, which revealed comparative advantages of participation in mutual trade, prove the complementarity of Ukrainian-French relations and the existing significant potential for bilateral cooperation between partner countries, which will contribute to the successful implementation of Ukraine’s European integration strategy. In general, if we consider the prospects of Ukrainian-French relations, the growing geopolitical and economic importance of Ukraine, multiplied by the foreign policy successes of our state and the degree of reliability of the Ukrainian market for foreign investors, will also force French political and business circles to intensify their efforts to ensure French national interests in Ukraine on the basis of strengthening and developing various forms of French-Ukrainian cooperation.

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