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- NATION BRANDING
- SOFT POWER
- VALUES OR BUSINESS?

Protracted Conflicts

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IT IS NECESSARY TO CREATE MESSAGES WITH THE IMAGE OF UKRAINE

*Interview with Anna Romanova,
Member of the Parliament of Ukraine*

1. What role does image play for modern states?

We live in the era of the Information Society. It means that information about goods and territories is much more important than some material things. Look: Nowadays information wars are more widespread and more effective than classic ones. Therefore, image, being a part of informational perception of the state by target consumers (tourists, investors), is more important than the availability of raw resources. A positive image makes an excess value of the territory, while a negative one – on the contrary – is a threat to the investment and tourism attractiveness.

2. When we are talking about branding of a country, do we mean just tourism?

Of course, no. Branding of a country encompasses and then influences the investment attractiveness of the country, the willingness to live, study, work, get medical treatment, and do business there. If a positive brand of the country is not created in time, the reputation will be formed spontaneously anyway. Moreover, generally, it is not always positive. Consider, for example, Colombia: What association comes up at the mention of this country? For the majority of people it's "the state of drug trafficking and drug barons". For decades, nobody cared about the branding of Colombia systematically. Thus, negative



A positive image makes an excess value of the territory, while a negative one – on the contrary – is a threat to the investment and tourism attractiveness

reputation was formed spontaneously. Unfortunately, we have a similar situation concerning Ukraine. It is necessary to understand that branding of a country is difficult, systematic, and expensive. But the result is worth it. Branding should begin with the political will of the state leadership. Corruption scandals of top officials are most harmful for the image of the whole state.

3. What can be the main components of the Ukrainian brand?

A big European country; a safe place with big opportunities for traveling, business, education, medical treatment, living... Open-minded, hospitable people, who, at the same time, respect their traditions (in the era of globalization and erasure of borders, a national identity and preservation of traditions are valuable).

Of course, it is necessary to stop the war to achieve the image of a safe country. Today it is important to disseminate the information that the war covers no more than 6% of the territory. And the risk of a

terrorist attack in the capital of Ukraine is lower than in other European capitals. We do not have such a number of migrants from the East and adherents to radical religious movements. The impeccable level of security and organization of the Eurovision Song Contest-2017 in Kyiv proves that.

4. The soft power of Ukraine: Myth or reality?

I think it is the best way of promotion. However, now we do not have a comprehensive vision of victory by means of soft power. What is “soft power”? Is it the struggle on the diplomatic front or success in technology? Unfortunately, we have failed to do both these things. Some steps are taken, but they are not systematic. This fact should be recognized in order to start improving rapidly, before it is too late.



I believe unless we make a strong brand of Ukraine which is grounded in our history, spirituality, and traditions, we will be a raw materials appendage

5. What are the priority steps to promote the positive image of Ukraine?

First, it is necessary to create messages with the image of Ukraine we want to see in the minds of potential tourists or investors. Then, it is important to target the markets, i.e. not to promote Ukraine for everybody. There is not enough budget for it. We have to choose priority countries.

I propose to focus on targeted international tourist markets, such as:

- 1) Neighboring countries (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Belarus);

- 2) Countries with which we have a stable tourist flow and good logistic connections (Turkey, Israel, Germany);

- 3) Countries with hyper-big tourist markets and tourists potentially interested in the Ukrainian tourist product (China, Canada);

- 4) Countries of potential consumers of the Ukrainian medical tourist product and services (Azerbaijan, UAE, Qatar).

These countries should be informed about Ukrainian investment and tourist products by means of holding “Ukrainian days” there, inviting journalists to press-tours, organizing fam-trips for specialists, tour operators, developers, etc.

6. What are the associations with Ukraine in the world?

I will be honest. Unfortunately, the majority of foreigners who have never been to Ukraine associate it with a country of revolutions, military conflict in Donbass, and... a country of sex-tourism with easily accessible women. The reputation of the state as a zone of cheap (free) “sex-tourism” damages the tourist industry, the image of Ukraine and Ukrainian women in general. The image of a cheap destination to find easily accessible women attracts a relevant contingent. It is like a snowball. The further the harder to get rid of such a tag.

I believe unless we make a strong brand of Ukraine which is grounded in our history, spirituality, and traditions, we will be a raw materials appendage, where raw materials are not just woods, amber, and soil, but women as well.

I even suggested obliging advertisers of strip clubs, “men’s clubs”, and erotic services to place billboards on the highway from Boryspil international airport promoting historical and architectural, natural-

recreational, and/or gastronomic tourist attractions of Ukraine, which would be equivalent to their advertising in terms of size and price.

This practice, provisionally called “if you advertise a brothel, pay for the advertising of Ukrainian architecture and nature”, should be fixed at the level of local authorities’ instructions.

Certainly, I do not agitate for the prohibition of communication with foreigners for Ukrainian girls. I am for creation and promotion of a strong brand of

Ukraine based on historic-architectural, gastronomic, cultural, nature-recreational tourist attractions. Nevertheless, usually there is not enough money for such a correct promotion.

Anna Romanova is a member of the Parliament of Ukraine, head of the subcommittee on tourism development, resorts and recreational activity. Representing “Samopomich Party”. In 2010-2014 was a deputy mayor of Chernihiv city. Romanova has a PhD in Economics.

NATION BRANDING: IS IT ONLY ABOUT TOURISM?

Dr. Hanna Shelest
UA: Ukraine Analytica

The article aims to answer the question on whether nation branding is only about tourism and investment attractions or has a deeper task of positioning the state among others. The author emphasizes that nation branding can have a double goal of uniting a nation around certain ideas and messages, but also of promoting the country for foreign consumers – cultural, touristic, business. The second one cannot come without the first one, as internal support can multiply the effect of promotion.

The goal of nation branding is usually perceived as promotion of tourism or exports, attraction of investments, and sometimes promotion of a particular event, such as the European Football Championship or Eurovision Song Contest, which hence can be seen as a part of tourism promotion or a more complex approach to formulating political, economic, and social image of the country abroad. More seldom, we are talking, and usually it is not a public campaign but shadow PR and lobbying, about changing the image and perception of the country's leader, with whom the state is closely associated. However, as Algis Junevicius writes: "Good state image ensures smooth integration into global market and international political system, helps to attract more foreign direct investments, tourists and secures that country will gain the support of foreign countries and international organizations in solving various economic, political and security issues".¹

Developing coherent and comprehensive country brands is of vital importance for transitional countries as branding can contribute to the success of the transition.²In the case of Poland, Hungary, and other countries of Central-Eastern Europe, such transition happened once, just after the collapse of the Soviet Union, so they were able to present a new image on the way to the European Union membership. In the case of the post-Soviet states, first of all Ukraine and Georgia, such transition happened twice (independence proclamation and the so-called coloured revolutions), or in the case of Ukraine even three times (Euromaidan), when every new stage led not only to the political, but also to the identical transformation.

In the case of emerging or transforming states, the process of national branding is also very important from the internal, in-state, point of view, as the authors of the developing concept

¹ A. Junevicius, M. Puidokas, *The Importance of Strategy for Forming State Image: Comparative Analysis of Lithuanian, Estonian and Finnish Cases*, "Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences", Vol. 213, 2015, p. 86.

² G. Szondi, *The Role and Challenges of Country Branding in Transition Countries: The Central and Eastern European Experience*, "Place Branding and Public Diplomacy", Vol. 3 (1), 2007, pp. 8-20.

need to answer the questions: Who are we and how would we like to be seen by others? Those are the questions raised usually by newly independent states or those that had just witnessed a serious internal turnover. “Just as corporate branding campaigns can raise the morale, team spirit, and sense of purpose of a company’s employees, nation branding campaigns can provide a country with a common sense of purpose and national pride – not to mention a higher standard of living”.³ For example, Euromaidan became symbolic and full of images because of several reasons. The word “maidan” already was set in the vocabulary of journalists and experts after the 2004 protests as a peaceful demonstration against corrupted power. The “euro” adding symbolized a clear orientation to the European Union, with its values, choice of the Association Agreement, and euro-path instead of the Soviet legacy and Russian dominance. It was not only positive for the protestors (and population in general) as it gave a purpose, some kind of a national idea absent before; but it also allowed to gain greater international support, as protestors were seen as democratic, pro-European strugglers, who really wanted to change the country.

Nation branding for a long time has been mostly associated with the cultural sphere: symbols, myths, visual perception, traditions, etc. Recently it was closely attached to public diplomacy. And extremely seldom it is perceived as a complex and comprehensive approach to the image of the state abroad – with what a country is associated. The latest perception does not mean that a concentration on politics, modern technologies, or foreign policy initiatives should substitute for cultural narratives. However, every state at a certain point of its development and a goal they set should identify priorities and vision for the national branding. Investments, tourism,

recognition of the name abroad, or enhancing political role – these spheres request different images and approaches to promote the state. Images of the post-Soviet states are still not always clear for the world audience.

Despite the fact, that public diplomacy and nation branding are being increasingly used in the same context both in the academic literature as well as in practice, the relationship between the two remains anecdotal and ambiguous. In the opinion of G. Szondi: “Nation branding is clearly situated in the marketing discipline, while public diplomacy largely remains in the realm of international relations and international communication”.⁴ In our opinion in the case of newly emerging states, public diplomacy can become a supporter and successor of nation branding, as first you need to identify a state on the world map, and then to use its strong sides to multiply the influence.



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Nation Branding Construction

There are two main approaches to the nation branding construction. One is proactive, when a state body or non-governmental association is taking the decision to promote a state or to change the perception towards it, to invent, create an image they think this state should be associated with. Such an approach is usually based on already existing images, symbols, and associations, which are carefully selected to fit in the constructed image.

³ R. Frost, *Mapping a Country’s Future*, “Brand Channel”, 2004 [http://www.brandchannel.com/features_effect.asp?pf_id=206]

⁴ G. Szondi, *Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences*, Discussion Papers in Diplomacy, Netherlands Institute of International Relations “Clingendael”, October 2008.

The second approach is reactive, when first comes not a goal to promote the state, but a case that had just happened, that evokes associations, and as a result, the campaign is used to multiply the effect. This happened, for example, with the Ukrainian Maidan in 2004, when a spontaneous event became one of the symbols, and the word itself became associated with a concrete country and actions – to protect your political rights and choice, to stand against corrupted government. The multiplication of the effect happened not only in the political sphere or journalistic expressions, but also at the visual level, when the orange colour (the colour of the protestors) for a decade clearly was associated with protests.

Such a reactive approach is also used when dealing with already existing products and goods to be exported. In the opinion of Randall Frost, “In the case of exports, the thinking goes something like this: once a country has become known as an exporter of quality branded goods, the country’s product brands and its place brand will work together to raise expectations overseas. Country branding should then become part of a self-perpetuating cycle: as the country promotes its consumer brands, those brands will promote the country.”⁵ In some cases, this analogy is well known and widely accepted, such as good cars for Germany, cheese for Netherlands, and wine for Georgia. However, practice shows that a country usually can concentrate its image only around one or two products, as a result minimizing the possibilities for others in terms of effective promotion, or leaving them alone in their marketing promotion abroad.

Talking about newly independent states or those just transformed, we can speak about two approaches to nation branding – top-down and bottom-up. When we speak about the bottom-up approach, we identify

separate products, images, destinations that we start promoting, and by the overall effect from such a campaign, we construct a general image of the country. In this case, the country starts to be identified abroad with these particular products, places, or events. The top-down approach is more comprehensive and difficult to address but in theory more sustainable for development – when the country becomes well known as a whole, with a certain reputation and perception of it in general, this influences the further promotion of certain goods or investments, when “made in” will be already be enough for consumers to try the product.

Usually single image branding is easier for small countries with a clear identity and focused economy. In the case of a product, its branding and promotion can be modified due to consumer preferences but also to have a very clear positioning – the best quality pictures camera, the safest car, the most high-profit investment. When we speak about a country, the question is more complicated, as it is more difficult to separate a component to be promoted, to choose only one. Sometimes it is accompanied with the issue of clear identification of priorities, not to contradict other possible spheres, first of all because it can send mixed signals for the outsiders – for example, how green tourism can coincide with an intense industrial development.

The next problem is to decide if we concentrate our campaign and nation branding on something material or spiritual (emotional). Material elements are usually difficult to adjust and modify; it can be nature, historical sightseeing, etc. We cannot change beaches to mountains if the biggest touristic choice this year is for ski resorts. But it also brings countries to the necessity to adjust their economies not to be associated with only one product or sphere, to propose more for their

⁵ R. Frost, *Mapping a Country's Future*, “Brand Channel”, 2004
[http://www.brandchannel.com/features_effect.asp?pf_id=206]

“clients” – tourists and businesses – such as a possibility of any season’s attractions or organization of congresses and conferences at summer resorts in winter, where all infrastructure is ready and not occupied.

Destination branding can be seen as a forerunner of nation branding, as it remains theoretically the most developed specialization of place branding with its primary focus on tourism.⁶ However, nation branding is a much broader concept, to which destination branding is only a part thereof. But also, nation branding cannot be associated purely with place branding, as it narrows the identification to a physical land, geography, or sightseeing attractions. While identifying and promoting a nation, we can go to non-material markers. For example, Finland, being a well-known destination, with strong pictures associated with both tourism (Santa Claus) and business (Nokia), several years ago decided to create a new country brand – mediation, first of all, of military conflicts, which was identified as a future priority of the country presentation by a group of governmental advisors. In 2008, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland Alexander Stubb appointed the Country Brand Delegation, whose task was to create a strategy for Finland that would convince the world to turn to it more often and more effectively. As a result, the final report “Mission for Finland” with 100 missions was presented in 2010, stating that the country brand efforts strive to promote Finland’s economy, tourism, and international status.⁷

Quite seldom, one slogan and nation brand can comprise both material and non-material causes. “Malaysia Truly Asia” is the best example when a touristic slogan, which is seen as a part of the destination, place branding, describes not food or sightseeing places or wonderful beaches, but a spiritual thing. This slogan can be easily used for promoting other spheres.

In the case of the post-Soviet space, such non-material messages were lacking individuality. The campaign “Ukraine. All about U” (2011)⁸ demonstrated at the CNN was easy to remember but was not associated particularly with Ukraine, but could be used for any country with the same first letter, without losing the meaning.

Three Caucasian states presented a series of commercials all in a similar vein – a mix of cultural traditions and search for modernity.

The “Grow with Georgia” (2009)⁹ campaign is a narrow, short-term show-off targeting only businesses looking for quick investments. Most of the others, like the “Summer in Georgia” (2016)¹⁰ advertisement, were based on the basics of the nation branding symbols (presenting modernity and traditional side of Georgia, in terms of destination, culture, food), but lacking the sole slogan identifying the country. At the same time, the “Georgia: Unforgettable Energy of Freedom” video¹¹ presented by Sukhishvili dance company in that sense had a wider and more unique approach

⁶ G. Szondi, *Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences*, Discussion Papers in Diplomacy, Netherlands Institute of International Relations “Clingendael”, October 2008.

⁷ *The Country Brand Delegation Sets Missions for Finland*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 25 November 2010 [http://www.formin.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=206470&contentlan=2&culture=en-US]

⁸ *Ukraine. All about U* media campaign, 04 February 2011 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pigu8RijfXk]

⁹ *Grow with Georgia – Georgia, the Best Place to Invest*, 24 February 2009 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYe-BovSr3k]

¹⁰ *Georgian National Tourism Administration – Summer in Georgia*, “JWT Metro”, 24 March 2016 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBkmKSmp_CM&list=RDjBkmKSmp_CM]

¹¹ *Georgia: Unforgettable Energy of Freedom*, Georgian Dancers promo (Sukhishvili), 17 September 2012 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uj065bBRQ4I]

that had a greater impact on the image of the country and its culture than previous advertisements. It can be easily followed even by the number of views on YouTube and mentions in the media. Spectacular Georgian traditional dancing with the sights of modern recognizable buildings such as the transparent police office or the Glass Bridge, as well as traditional historical sightseeing places, accompanied by a contemporary adaptation of music – all united by the slogan “Unforgettable Energy of Freedom” – concentrated the very sense of all Georgian campaigns and nation branding efforts of those years.

“Azerbaijan – Land of Flames”¹² by Heidar Aliyev Foundation, “Azerbaijan: Land of Future” and “Azerbaijan: Land of Miracles” – all these slogans comprised in 2012 the general concept presenting Azerbaijan at the world arena. However, all the presentations were full of beauty, light and motion – but lacked individuality. Later the “Azerbaijan: Land of Future” campaign became annual, supported by the biggest Azerbaijan oil company SOCAR, and new videos were usually presented at such events as Davos Forum, European Games, etc.

The “Kazakhstan – Heart of Eurasia”¹³ campaign has in its idea the nation branding approach, trying to place the people and the country in a certain cultural and geographical realm, which provokes a further array of associations. However, the slogan was not identified with the visual range of that commercial, full of traditional cultural pictures in parallel with a modern city. This is probably the best example of mis-branding, when the desire to show the best picturesque landscapes results just in a banal tourism advertisement, while the slogan is going beyond the video footage. It is mis-branding, because the

picture demonstrates the country only as a touristic attraction, while the slogan can be much more multilayered, demonstrating the business, transport, and even political opportunities.

Is Only the State Responsible?

Another question countries face in nation branding is: Should it be a responsibility of the state only? Or should it not be a responsibility of the state at all, as sometimes, poor reputation of the government itself can negatively influence the perception even of the best campaign? At the same time, governments usually do not consult with their citizens on future branding and campaigns; the messages chosen can be unsupported by the population, which will negatively influence the whole campaign, as internal support will be lost, leading to no accumulative efforts, when citizens start unconsciously to multiply messages of the state promotion. It happened in Ukraine in 2012, when the experts and population poorly accepted the developed branding.

State strategies also depend on which state institution is in charge of developing and implementing the nation-branding program. It can be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Information Policy, Tourism Agency, or a specially established body (fully state or a mix with business representatives), such as Enterprise Estonia or Brand Commission of Lithuania. Approaches used by these agencies will differ, depending on the priorities of the respective institutions in daily work. The Ministry of Culture will focus on cultural and historical heritage, while the Ministry of Economy on investment attraction, so both will lack a complex and coherent approach, but rather be advertising a particular sphere.

¹² *Welcome To Azerbaijan – Land of Flame*, 01 February 2012 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCu4YaN8_Sw]

¹³ *Kazakhstan – Heart of Eurasia*, 04 November 2012 [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QB6T17h1trk>]

Also an important element of nation branding is that it cannot be a monopoly of one stakeholder and controlled by the government or a business association. When products get to the market, most of the information and perception we get is from the sources initiated by the “producer” – advertisement campaign, product placement, etc., with a little knowledge from friends’ opinion or professional magazines’ surveys. When we talk about a country, the information flow is not controlled, as we study about it at school, watch TV with news and comments from this country, sometimes we have counter propaganda in action, we visit this country or see its citizens in our cities. As a result, the country or its government is not the only source of information and image presentation. “Borat” movie has strongly come to mind of those who think about Kazakhstan, no matter how far this image is from reality. Hollywood movies of the 1990s usually presenting big criminals and dark places based somewhere in former Yugoslavia or Prague are also from this range.

Most of the countries use specialized marketing agencies, which are overseen by governmental representatives. This can bring a set of “ideological” problems, when business and government perceive promotion differently. However, this situation can have yet one more angle – should such agencies be national ones, or can they be top professionals from abroad? On the one hand, local marketing specialists have better initial background, knowing the weak and strong sides of the country, feeling its soul, and understanding the goals. On the other hand, foreigners are those who are targeted, and it is important to have

an objective view towards the country. For example, the British “know-how” of nation branding has been present in the case of several Eastern European countries’ branding campaigns, including Estonia (Interbrand), Poland (Saffron), Latvia (Said Business School), Croatia (Simon Anholt), and Bulgaria (British Council).¹⁴



an important element of nation branding is that it cannot be a monopoly of one stakeholder and controlled by the government or a business association

In the opinion of Nicolas Papadopoulos of the Sprott School of Business at Carleton University, place branding is usually facing “lack of unity of purpose, difficulty in establishing actionable and measurable objectives”.¹⁵ One of these measurable elements should be the target audience, who they are, whom we are addressing or want to persuade. Have we decided to present the country out of the blue, in general, or do we have an exact purpose?

National tourism organizations were the first ones to get involved in destination branding during the early years of the transition in the CEE countries, concentrating on domestic and international tourism.¹⁶ So tourism became the first goal of nation branding. Investment attraction became the second most important goal, so different strategies should be elaborated for business people, who used to perceive the region as post-Soviet, dark, with absence of free market or fair play.

¹⁴ G. Szondi, *Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences*, Discussion Papers in Diplomacy, Netherlands Institute of International Relations “Clingendael”, October 2008.

¹⁵ R. Frost, *Mapping a Country's Future*, 2004 [http://www.brandchannel.com/features_effect.asp?pf_id=206]

¹⁶ G. Szondi, *The Role and Challenges of Country Branding in Transition Countries: The Central and Eastern European Experience*, “Place Branding and Public Diplomacy”, Vol. 3 (1), 2007, pp. 8-20.

Conclusions

Nevertheless, is national branding only about tourism and investments? Definitely no. Nation branding should promote a nation, not a place. Nation branding can be defined as a strategic self-presentation of a country with the aim of creating reputational capital through economic, political, and social interest promotion at home and abroad.¹⁷ It should be a wider and more complex concept, which comprises several elements: tourism promotion, investment attraction promotion, country PR, representation at the biggest world affairs events, constant information work, public diplomacy, which will construct a constant image of the country and its people. Certain “symbols” can be additional triggers to stimulate the range of associations with the country but not the substitute of these.

In the case of the Eastern European states, especially the post-Soviet states, nation branding should have a double purpose. It is a search for the joint national idea and self-perception as not a “post-Soviet” one

but something unique, however escaping nationalistic sentiments. The second purpose is similar to the first one but with an external concern – to prevent others from seeing you only as post-Soviet or identical to Russia, but to identify with concrete individual images for each state. Such a change cannot happen only by means of TV advertisements, but should include a clear information strategy, identifying target audience, layers of perception, messages to be delivered, and images to be associated with.

Dr. Hanna Shelest, Editor-in-chief of UA: Ukraine Analytica and member of the board at the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”. Previously Dr. Shelest served as a senior researcher at Odessa branch of the National Institute for Strategic Studies and a visiting research fellow at the NATO Defence College (Italy). She has experience in public and private PR. She has a PhD in International Relations, specializing in conflict resolution, security, and foreign policy. Hanna Shelest is a Rotary Peace Fellow (2010), John Smith Fellow (2012), and Marshall Memorial Fellow (2016).

¹⁷ G. Szondi, *Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences*, Discussion Papers in Diplomacy, Netherlands Institute of International Relations “Clingendael”, October 2008.

NATION BRANDING: GLOBAL TRENDS AND UKRAINE'S CHALLENGES

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Governments design and implement sophisticated nation branding and public diplomacy programs with a goal of bringing more tourists, beckoning more foreign direct investment, and promoting export. However, reputation of a nation can hurt investment, tourism, and export. In this article, we will answer the following questions: Why is soft power important? How to increase FDI? How can corporate brands influence country image? What are the challenges Ukraine is facing? What practical steps are made by Ukraine's civil society to project a positive image of Ukraine?

Countries are starting to look more and more like corporations. Like corporations, they have to attract foreign investors, to compete for the attention of the world press, tourists, and markets for goods and services. In explaining the theory of neo-realism back in the late 1970s, well-known American analyst and international relations specialist Kenneth Waltz compared the behaviour of countries at the international level with the behaviour of companies. He thought that countries should carry out their external policies from a position of strength and self-interest, with the aim of thus gaining the greatest economic benefit. It is not for nothing that the concept of competitiveness, once used only with reference to business, at this stage appeared in discourse in political and academic circles in the US, Europe, and Japan and has long dominated the speeches of these countries' leaders.

Branding, traditionally considered as one of the most important components of

marketing, entered government vocabulary relatively recently. Studies on the emergence of this term in political circles were carried out for the first time at the end of the 1990s. At their source were two British branding experts, Wally Olins and Simon Anholt. Since that time, considerable experience has been accumulated that can be generally viewed as a theory of nation branding. The idea itself was not novel, as earlier, such terms as national image, national identity, or national reputation had been used.

According to Wally Olins, attitudes towards nations are formed from myth, rumour, or anecdote, which can hurt trade, tourism, and inward investment.

¹In his term, Simon Anholt characterizes nation brand as a sum of people's perceptions in six areas of national competence: people, tourism, exports, governance (domestic and foreign policy), inward investment and immigration, culture and heritage.²

¹ W. Olins, *Wally Olins on Brand*, Thames & Hudson: New York 2003.

² S. Anholt, *Editorial. Place Branding*, 2005, pp. 333-46.

Nations reshape their identities, because they need to project the real change to all the audiences with whom they relate. "Prejudice and ignorance have to be dispelled through ads, brochures, websites, competitive tenders, beauty parades, presentations and all other paraphernalia of modern marketing".³ This is especially relevant for countries that are undergoing rapid transition. Having freed themselves from communism, Eastern European nations embarked on rapid reform. They had to communicate to the international community the new images. So, nation branding was a strong communication tool for them to raise awareness about the changes in the legal and business environment, investment opportunities, tourism, etc.



Nations reshape their identities, because they need to project the real change to all the audiences with whom they relate

Simon Anholt sees nation branding as a "systematic process of aligning the actions, behaviours, investments, innovations and communications of a country around a clear strategy for achieving enhanced competitive identity".⁴ This can range from modest cooperation between a government committee for tourism and an investment agency to the decade-long enactment of coordinated and clearly planned strategies within the country and on the international arena in the arts, sports, education, politics, tourism, and international trade.

Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and Nation Branding

Nation branding is the first important step in investment promotion. In a report conducted for International Finance Corporation in 2000, Wells and Wint divided investment promotion into three parts: image building, investment generation, and investor service.⁵ Image building is aimed at improving a country's image within the investment community as a favourable location for investment. Investment-generating activities pursue the goal of generating investment directly and investment-service activities include services provided to prospective and current investors.

According to Kotler, building and maintaining an "effective image" is fundamental to investment promotion. An "effective image" must be "realistic, believable, simple to understand, attractive to investors and distinctive, with unique attributes that make the place stand out among other places".⁶ An interesting fact has been revealed when studying the FDI flows into the four Eastern European countries, namely Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovakia. According to Rafał Wiśniewski, deputy Foreign Minister of Poland in charge of the Polish national brand program (2005-2007), most of the market-seeking or resource-seeking FDI that flew into the four countries in the early and mid-1990s were driven by the traditional determinants, such as market size, labour costs, ease of doing business, proximity to the EU market, etc. However, he argues that FDI that came at the turn of the century was influenced by certain messages

³ W. Olins, *Wally Olins on Brand*, Thames & Hudson: New York 2003, p. 160.

⁴ S. Anholt, *Brand New Justice*, Butterworth Heinemann: Elsevier 2003.

⁵ L. Wells, A. Wint, *Marketing a Country: Promotion as a Tool for Attracting FDI*, International Finance Corporation: Washington 2000.

⁶ P. Kotler, D. H. Haider, I. Rein, *Marketing Places: Attracting Investment, Industry and Tourism to Cities, States, and Nations*, Free Press: New York 1993, pp. 149-150.

that the countries were communicating about their locations. In other words, in addition to the availability of the traditional FDI determinants, national branding played its role.⁷

Marketing inward investment is a serious, expensive, and sophisticated business. Its main goal is presenting a nation in a powerful, attractive, and differentiating way. Some argue that self-promotion plays a significant role in attracting FDI. A paper by the researchers John Pantzalis and Carl A. Rodrigues, *Country Names as Brands – Symbolic Meaning and Capital Flows*⁸, showed that investors are often heavily influenced by the brands of countries, which in turn affects the movement of international capital in and out of those countries. For example, investors might group several countries together because of superficial brand associations – the ‘Asian Tigers’ sounded like a good bet, but in fact some of the countries branded as tiger economies shouldn’t really have been in the group at all, and made a lot of people lose a lot of money.

Wells and Wint provided a good account of different “influence tools” or marketing techniques used by investment promotion agencies to attract foreign investment. They studied among 10 other agencies Indonesia’s Investment Coordinating Board, the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority, Singapore’s Economic Development Board, and Thailand’s Board of Investment. According to their report, promotional techniques consist of providing information to potential investors, creating an attractive image of the country as a place to invest, and providing services to prospective investors. Although attracting foreign

investment requires efforts in many areas, such as institution building, facilitating agglomeration effects, fighting corruption, improving investment legal environment, etc., promotion techniques serve as medium for communicating all these efforts to potential investors. Investment promotion “includes the following types of activity: advertising, direct mailing, investment seminars, investment missions, participation in trade shows and exhibitions, distribution of literature, one-to-one direct marketing efforts, preparation of itineraries for visits of prospective investors, matching prospective investors with local partners, acquiring permits and approvals from various government departments, preparing project proposals, conducting feasibility studies, and providing services to the investor after projects have become operational”.⁹

In the course of interviews with officials from promotion agencies, 12 different promotional techniques were identified: advertising in general financial media, participating in investment exhibitions, advertising in industry or sector-specific media, conducting general investment missions from source country to host country or from host country to source country, conducting general information seminars on investment opportunities, engaging in direct mail or telemarketing campaigns, conducting industry or sector-specific investment missions from source country to host country or vice versa, conducting industry or sector-specific information seminars, engaging in firm-specific research followed by “sales” presentations, providing investment counselling services, expediting the processing of applications and permits, providing post-investment services.

⁷ R. Wisniewski, *Speech at the Conference “Location Branding”*, London, March 2006.

⁸ J. Pantzalis, C. Rodrigues, *Country Names as Brands – Symbolic Meaning and Capital Flows*, Monclair State University, 1999.

⁹ L. Wells, A. Wint, *Marketing a Country: Promotion as a Tool for Attracting FDI*, International Finance Corporation: Washington 2000.

Image building is usually preceded by investment generation activities. But it is not always the case. For those countries that do not have a negative image for inward investment, the initial period of image building is not required. Often agencies start with the easy techniques, such as advertising or general missions. As they learn that it does not bring immediate results, they make their approach more targeted. Also, it appears that large countries need less of a marketing effort than small countries. As the world's most populous country, China is well known to investors. The potential market of a billion or more people has been enough to bring foreign investors to China without model marketing efforts on the part of the country. Investors came for export projects even when China's domestic market was largely shut off, in hopes of some day gaining access to that market. China might benefit from better investment promotion, but promotion is clearly not necessary in order to bring the country to the attention of many investors.

Branding a Country's Export

Establishing a national brand is the best tool for improving the appeal of products from the manufacturer's country. A brilliant example of this is Japan. In the 1950s, Japanese products were not widely used, but by the 1980s, the situation had changed dramatically. For example, the British household appliances chain Dixons began to manufacture tools under the Matsui brand, imitating products made by the Mitsui Corporation and successfully making use of a well-known Japanese appliance brand.

In addition to all this, it is very important to look at the country's own domestic brands and to consider how they might be used to help the country's economy expand. If we analyse the export structures of countries in the first and third worlds, we can see that developed countries get their current revenues not from exporting natural

resources, of which there is not that much anyway, but from exporting manufactured products, which are sold, thanks to smart marketing strategies, as brands. For instance, Italy sells Gucci, Ferraris, and Barbaresco. France sells Louis Vuitton, L'Oreal, and Hennessy; Germany sells Mercedes, Adidas, BASF; Switzerland sells Swiss watches, Victorinox, and stellar banking services epitomized by the Credit Suisse and UBS, while the US company Starbucks was smart enough to make a fortune selling coffee.

One can only imagine how much Brazil would make if it exported Marlboro, Starbucks, and Nestlé, and not tobacco, coffee, cocoa, and sugar. Thus, we can see that the use of branding among national corporations cannot only bring profits to the company itself, but tax revenues to the state treasuries. Developing countries like Ukraine find themselves in the so-called "poverty trap." They are unable to significantly increase revenues from their exports, because they effectively sell raw materials – commodities: steel, chemicals, grain, and so on, but not brands. But the difference is vivid when the question comes to Antonov airplanes, which is clearly associated with the state name.

How to Create a National Brand?

Creating a national brand can serve many ends. For instance, for a country like Ethiopia, which survives on the basis international handouts and is associated with instability, poverty, disease, and corruption, branding will be aimed not at evoking pity but at presenting the country's tourism, investment, and professional opportunities.

At the same time, for countries like Germany and the UK, the issue of branding is not so much in establishing as in supporting and protecting the national brand as a valuable asset and the key element in their competitive advantage. However, even they cannot take it for granted.

Germany faces challenges: the Volkswagen emissions scandal has rocked a key soft-power industry; the return of a far right party to the Bundestag for the first time since 1945 played out awkwardly; and Berlin has lost some of its attractiveness amid rising rents. For the UK, it is not only the decision to leave the EU that has dented its image but also the political instability that followed, the nadir being a general election almost as reckless as the Brexit referendum. Nevertheless, the UK scores big on tourism figures; cultural outreach is well entwined with diplomacy, and from the sport to the arts, the UK is in the top world. The BBC continues to speak to the world, with new services including Amharic and Pidgin trying to better reach the audiences of East and West Africa respectively.¹⁰

To create a positive international image for a country, government bodies generally establish separate organizations, such as Presence Switzerland or the Institute Marki Polskiej in Poland. The more famous organizations are the Goethe Institute, Alliance Française, and the British Council, entities that function as a tool of public diplomacy for their countries. Public diplomacy is a way to match the country's foreign policy actions with its strategy for a national brand.

As the 2020 Olympics approach, Japan is doing things that seem so obvious to the outsiders and is realizing the benefits of promoting itself internationally. It is finally taking advantage of its culinary and cultural mastery to sell the country and is rolling out a network of houses overseas as part of its Japan House project. The Foreign Ministry is funding Japan Houses in Sao Paulo, London, and Los Angeles.



Public diplomacy is a way to match the country's foreign policy actions with its strategy for a national brand.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry has recently launched the Cool Japan Fund, a public-private initiative whose projects include showcasing Japanese food and drink in venues around Europe. At the same time, the government is fostering Japan's UNESCO-recognized washoku cuisine by easing visa rules for foreign chefs working or studying in Japan and they introduced a certification system targeting restaurants around the world serving Japanese food. Additionally, the Land Ministry has dispatched a team of experts to revive 40 (of the 500) Japanese gardens around the world. Moreover, the government aspires to show that in addition to a strong innovation economy, it has more to the country's popular culture than anime and J-pop.¹¹

Ukraine Efforts: Post Revolution of Dignity

Not only business but also civil society organizations can join efforts in country promotion and filling the information gap. Launched in early March of 2014, Ukraine Crisis Media Center has been serving as the major multilingual news agency delivering information on the key developments in Ukraine's security, economic, and public sectors. A group of strategic communications professionals and foreign policy analysts established the centre. Since its inception, UCMC aimed at filling in the public diplomacy void of the new fledgling

¹⁰ "Monocle", December 2017/January 2018, Issue 109, p. 51-59.

¹¹ "Monocle", December 2017/January 2018, Issue 109, p. 51-59.

¹² "Ukraine Crisis Media Center" [www.uacrisis.org]

government. The centre has run many campaigns and carried out a plethora of projects, which were designed to alter the perception of Ukraine on the global stage.¹² Here are several notable projects, which best reflect public diplomacy efforts.

Devised in 2014, the UN Hundred was among the very first UCMC's public affairs projects. The idea was rather simple and revolutionary at the same time – a multimedia book highlighting critical topics for Ukraine. The UN Hundred is, on the one hand, linked to the UNGA resolution 68/262, where 100 nations supported Ukraine's territorial integrity, but on the other hand, it is associated with the Maidan activists who operated in the units of 100. The project included a book, which was individually presented to the heads of states and governments during the UN General Assembly in New York. Each book had its own theme: 2014 – Euromaidan and Russian Aggression; 2015 – Annexation of Crimea; 2016 – Innovations in Ukraine; 2017 – Investing in Ukraine. It was a global public affairs project with a very limited target audience. The book was personally handed to over 100 country leaders, who in total represented over a billion people. UCMC aspired to change the attitude towards Ukraine by directly influencing the UN member-states' heads of state.

Prior to the referendum on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, which was held in the Netherlands in early April of 2016, UCMC ran its ad hoc office for three months in Amsterdam. Its team provided communications support to many Ukrainian NGOs and business associations reaching out to the Dutch public. One of the follow-up campaigns was called the Three Nations – One Freedom campaign and was carried out in the Netherlands in May of 2017.¹³ The

format of the campaign included targeted TV spots on major Dutch TV channels and a full-page advertorial in *De Telegraaf*, a leading daily. Here, 93-year-old Wally Bunka, a Ukrainian Canadian participant of the D-Day appeared in the video glimpsing into his grief and pride over his fallen 117 Ukrainian Canadian comrades, who gave their lives for freedom of the Dutch people. The idea of the campaign, subsequently leading to the positive vote of the Dutch Senate on Agreement ratification, was to bring more awareness among the Dutch about Ukraine, about the heroic role of the Ukrainian Canadians in the history of liberation of the Netherlands from the Nazis. This campaign was also to assert the international solidarity of people who share similar democratic values.

UCMC was behind the Hero Faces¹⁴ campaign through the ad in the *Washington Post*. The ad depicted the faces of Ukrainian armed service members, volunteers, and medics. By inviting the audience to Look Closely at Their Faces and realize that these young men and women are at the forefront of civilizational divide at the frontier between Ukraine and Russia. In July 2017, UCMC used the visual campaign during the G20 meeting in Hamburg, where the meeting between President Trump and President Putin was to be held. The billboard at the price of approximately \$250/day was placed right at the entrance to the building hosting the meeting. However, one day prior to the end of G20 meeting, it was taken down (as it turned out later, at the request of a local mayor). As the result, the billboard generated two waves of media coverage. The first time it was when it was put up and the second time when it was taken down. Due to the violation of the contract terms, the advertisement company returned all the money.

¹³ *Three Nations – One Freedom Project* [<http://threenations-onefreedom.org>]

¹⁴ *The Heroes Faces Project* [<https://herofaces.org>]

At the time of war, a nation's reputation becomes a national security concern, when the information sphere becomes a battlefield. In this field, governmental and civil society efforts should supplement each other. UCMC became one of the successful examples of combating fake news and massive disinformation emanating from the Kremlin, but at the same time making an impact on creating a necessary image of the Ukrainian state. The country's perception has an impact on Ukraine's key stakeholders in major world capitals. It is crucial for the Ukrainian government to communicate the reforms in the areas of economy, rule of law, and judiciary. Ukraine's support depends on the transformations it can deliver at these extremely challenging times in history. There has never been such a strong demand for efficient public diplomacy, when Ukraine badly needs to overcome the hurdles and successfully navigate the murky waters polluted by the Kremlin.

Investing in the National Brand Is Good For Everyone

Ukraine has a long way to go yet. A recent survey conducted by the Institute of World Policy about the perceptions of Ukraine in Europe has established that Ukraine is associated with Maidan, Russian aggression (war), and famous Ukrainians such as Klitschko brothers, winner of the 2016 Eurovision Song Contest Jamala, and President Poroshenko. Simultaneously, the country is associated with corruption and instability.¹⁵

Ukraine's hosting the Eurovision Song Contest in May of 2017 helped to dispel many stereotypes. Firstly, Ukraine could overcome the perception that the war is all over Ukraine. Secondly, Europeans have discovered that Kyiv is a quick flight away

from their cities, is relatively cheap and hospitable. The audience of the ESC finals was over 200 million people worldwide, exceeding the audience the World Cup Championship finals. Over 20,000 foreign visitors came to Kyiv and experienced the celebration of music, and so had the possibility to see for themselves and became the agents of information dissemination.



At the time of war, a nation's reputation becomes a national security concern, when the information sphere becomes a battlefield.

Ukrainian government has overhauled and relaunched Invest Ukraine, the investment promotion agency, which was terminated in 2014 after the blatant embezzlement perpetrated by the previous management. Also, former Chief of Staff of the President of Ukraine set up the National Investment Council, which operates as an NGO but is closely linked to the office of the President. Undoubtedly, they are not just spending international donors' and private money but are engaging in meaningful activities. So who should be involved in making Ukraine's national brand? If we think of Simon Anholt's chart of nation branding as the sum total of a country's promotion in six areas, then everyone should be involved.

The logical next step in establishing Ukraine's image would be to run a national program called "Brand Ukraine." In general, its success should amount to having competent professionals who can coordinate the work of relevant government agencies and other organizations. This is a case of the person being more important than the position.

¹⁵ *How Ukraine Was Perceived by Guests of the Eurovision Song Contest?*, "GfK Survey", Institute of World Policy, May 2017, funded by the USAID through Pact in Ukraine.

Investing in efforts to develop Ukraine's image can be seen as a classical win-win situation. Putting money into the country's brand is good for everyone: the government, business, and the general population. The practice in developed countries is for the government to invest about 10–20% of the necessary funds directly from the budget. Business can function as the main sponsor, as it stands to gain the most from Ukraine's good image, ahead of both the government and the people. Major Ukrainian corporations and foreign investors in Ukraine are quite able to support this kind of process. A significant role might also be played by business organizations such as the European Business Association, the American Chamber of Commerce, the Ukrainian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, SUP – Association of Ukrainian Entrepreneurs, and other bilateral chambers of commerce.

Business and government can work together. One example of this kind of cooperation is a public awareness campaign run by Germany "Du bist Deutschland" and "Germany, Land of Ideas." The first one was launched in fall 2006 and aimed at branding domestically; the second was launched at the beginning of this year around the World Football Cup and was aimed at strengthening Germany's international image. The list of companies that contributed to this informational campaign is impressive. Among them were Adidas, Bayer, BASF, DHL, Deutsche Telecom, E.ON, Deutsche Bank, Bertelsmann, Fidelity International, and others.

Business is capable of establishing a fund that would carry out the National Brand Ukraine Program. Thus, Ukrainian, European, American companies could make their own contribution to accelerating Ukraine's economy. In addition to money, such companies can contribute their know-how, contacts and international experience. The National Brand Ukraine Program will not only contribute to establishing an international image for Ukraine, but will also work on establishing a national identity in Ukraine, a sense of a general purpose and national pride. This, in turn, could help unite Ukrainians around a single idea: the economic development of their country.

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NATION BRANDS AND THE CASE STUDY OF UKRAINE

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The aim of the article is to present theory and practice of national branding, with Ukraine – not included in typical branding reports – as a case study. Theoretical background to the concept of national branding is presented in the first section of the article. The second part is focused on key international branding indexes and shows the differences and similarities among them, as well as their flexibility in responding to theory. The third part of the article is focused on the picture that one may draw about Ukraine and its image and brand from various international rankings that serve as a substitute for branding surveys.

Introduction

Observations and reflections from a lecture on nation branding the author gave in spring, during a public diplomacy course, served as an inspiration to this article.¹ The author's students were representing a dozen of developing countries from three continents. The idea was to conduct a lecture on nation branding and show how students' respective countries performed in various branding indexes. The majority of the countries, however, were not represented in these surveys. This observation was a proof that the branding indexes (and some others, too) focused mainly on developed, and mostly Western, countries.

Therefore, it was assumed that if analysts, diplomats, and investors wanted to conduct a research on the brand of any developing country, they needed to use the data collected in other reports.² The surveys

that the author found most representative covered both the politics and the economy of countries. Branding reports put more emphasis on economic factors, meaning that political situation in developed countries was perceived as to a large extent set.

Theoretical Background

National branding is a fascinating and multidisciplinary field of expertise. There is not much theory here, but it provides for a plethora of practical examples from all over the world of how countries try to build their national brands and of how these brands are ranked and perceived. In this article the following definition, proposed by Keith Dinnie, is chosen to set the scene: The nation-brand is "the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences", which puts a lot of

¹ More on the public diplomacy course can be found on SlideShare: [<https://www.slideshare.net/KatarzynaRybkaIwaska>]

² My article on top international reports and surveys is, where many more indexes can be found, is available here: [<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/my-top-20-country-rankings-avalanche-links-katarzyna-rybka-iwa%C5%84ska/>]

emphasis on the perception of a country in the eyes of various public opinion groups and stakeholders.³

There is a crucial expert and theorist, Wally Olins, who broadly contributed to marketing studies and political discussions on the national branding, which have been fundamental for shaping new concepts since the 1980s. W. Olins introduced key elements to both theoretical and practical discussions.



national branding is outwards-oriented, whereas (re) shaping the national identity focuses on the inwards dimension, mainly on the creation of national community and unity national branding is outwards-oriented, whereas (re)shaping the national identity focuses on the inwards dimension, mainly on the creation of national community and unity

He stated that nations “have always tried to create and modulate their reputations in order to create domestic loyalties and coherence and promote their own power and influence in neighbouring countries”.⁴ All W. Olins, in his humble perception, has done, was to use the term “branding” and marketing techniques to explain the activities in the field.

According to his theses, nations continue to shape and reshape their identities (a notion much broader than an image) and to rebrand (a notion much closer to an image and marketing). Both processes are important, although they address different dimensions. Largely, national branding is outwards-oriented, whereas (re)shaping

the national identity focuses on the inwards dimension, mainly on the creation of national community and unity (these processes naturally influence each other). They need to adapt and to project this real change symbolically to all the audiences with whom they relate, outside and inside of a country. For example: The Dutch East Indies became Indonesia, its capital Batavia was renamed and became Jakarta, a new language, Bahasa Indonesia, was developed.

Another element introduced by W. Olins was focused on building competitive advantages, i.e. on three areas of competition among nations and countries, not only over political influence, but especially over their economic leverage. The first area was devoted to exports and trade. For example, cars (Mercedes, Audi, BMW, VW) are Germany’s premium exports good. It provides for some advantages, because everything close to engineering gets credit: Companies such as Siemens, Bosch, Braun, Miele benefit from the motor industry prestige. It does not make it easier, however, to be connected to the German national branding when it comes to other labels such as Jil Sander, Hugo Boss, Nivea, or Allianz, which do not match the engineering portfolio.

Thus, as Wally Olins describes, if the nation’s leading brands represent a narrow, well-defined sector, they may flourish, but other brands may face more challenges in building their international leverage. Often they will not put any emphasis on their country of origin.

Another area of image competition between states are foreign direct investments (FDIs), as well as pulling talents and creative manpower from all over the world, what is “influenced by local legislation, tax breaks, regional funding,

³ K. Dinnie, et. al. *The Relevance, Scope and Evolution of Nation Branding* [in:] K. Dinnie (ed.), *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*, Elsevier Ltd. 2008, p. 15.

⁴ W. Olins, *Making a National Brand*, [in:] J. Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Palgrave MacMillan 2005, p. 170.

education level of employees⁵, government attitudes, transport infrastructure, and many more. These various factors make the competition somehow hard-core, expanding well beyond PR activities. Marketing, however – and successful campaigns aimed at making a place fashionable to invest in – plays its role, too.

The third area of competition is tourism, where countries compete over the numbers of people that come and visit. But this sphere is complex. For instance, there is a danger of getting large numbers of tourists that a country cannot effectively handle and cannot provide with a reasonable standard of leisure. This may cause damage in the sphere of image and branding. Moreover, the majority of countries compete through very similar claims of having the best views, the most convenient tourist resorts, the whitest beaches, and breathtaking sightseeing opportunities. It is not easy, but it is necessary to find a niche, to differentiate, to be unique if a country is to achieve success in the field.⁶

If just these three economic dimensions were to be taken into account, they would have already formed a complex mosaic of challenges for countries that want to take care of their branding and international standing. Yet, the field of national branding reaches further than the economic rivalry. The efficient branding programme has to take into account also other public diplomacy fields, including cultural, sports, economic, arts, digital, youth, and many other endeavours. As there are many different stakeholders when it comes to the senders of the branding message, there are also many, maybe countless, addressees.

As W. Olins underlined, launching and managing a national branding programme is more complex, sophisticated, and long-term than managing a similar (in name) programme for any company. It requires the engagement of many more actors (from government, business, and society circles) and all of them should feel the “all hands on deck” principle.



If just these three economic dimensions were to be taken into account, they would have already formed a complex mosaic of challenges for countries that want to take care of their branding and international standing

It also takes years to see the results – and they still may not be tangible. Moreover, “politicians like quick results that get them votes and that is why so many national branding programmes are taken up enthusiastically and then dropped”⁷. Maybe one of the reasons for this failing enthusiasm, motivation, and discipline is an endless and tiring competition. As Philip Seib quotes two moguls, Pete Cashmore of Mashable in his “The Future of Diplomacy” – “content is not a scarce resource; attention is a scarce resource” and Charles Firestone of the Aspen Institute – “the ability to get attention is a real asset, as attention is the real scarcity with the overabundance of information”⁸.

Therefore, according to Simon Anholt, “[b]rand management should be treated as a ‘component of national policy’, never as a

⁵ W. Olins, *Making a National Brand*, [in:] J. Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Palgrave MacMillan 2005, p. 175.

⁶ L. de Chernatony, *Adapting Brand Theory to the Context of Nation Branding*, [in:] K. Dinnie (ed.), *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*, Elsevier Ltd. 2008, p. 19.

⁷ W. Olins, *Making a National Brand*, [in:] J. Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Palgrave MacMillan 2005, p. 178.

⁸ P. Seib, *The Future of Diplomacy*, “Polity Press”, 2016, p. 36.

'campaign' that is separate from planning, governance or economic development. [...] If brand management is put into a silo of 'communications' or 'public affairs', there is little it can do. But when it informs policy-making and becomes implicit in the way the country is run, it can dramatically accelerate change"⁹.

Key Branding Indexes

Wally Olin's categorisation is a basis for branding indexes. Although, if sticking to theory, they should treat economic leverage as a foundation, they all have their own perspectives and angles, put emphasis on different elements of the typology, and add their own ones, if only they find them suitable.

There are four internationally acknowledged national branding indexes that should be taken into account in any analysis of a country's image. One should note, however, that when a country is assessed by its peers or by investors, many other indexes are taken into consideration and have an impact on a general assessment. The next section of the article will show what picture of Ukraine stems from many other international indexes. Here, the author will focus on the shape and perspectives of key branding indexes.

The first index to be assessed is the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index.¹⁰ It is composed of a hexagon constructed by a well-known expert in the field, Simon Anholt (quoted above), in 2000. Six categories that are tackled in the index are: governance, exports, tourism, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, people. It is clearly visible that the economic leverage is not enough to perform

well in this index. The magnetism, "power to attract people", "the population's reputation for competence, openness and friendliness", "appreciation for [a country's] contemporary culture" – these descriptions prove that nation branding is closely interlinked with the notion and concept of soft power.

It is also clear that when it comes to branding, it is not the real situation that matters the most, but the perception and assessment of it. On the other hand, as Jian Wang writes in his article, "as the contemporary communication ecology has become decidedly transparent, the content and expressions in a nation-branding program can easily be questioned and contested. So the potential loss of trust as a result of gross misrepresentation is incalculable and can be very difficult to recover. That's why the incentive for credible and authentic branding outweighs that for exaggeration and propaganda"¹¹.

There were 50 nations measured in the latest edition of the index. A large percentage of developing countries were left out. The survey is focused mainly on developed countries. The Top 10 is composed of Western countries (Japan included) and there are no newcomers in comparison to 2015. All of the Top 10 countries, however, have lost points in various categories. The growing global scepticism towards their accountability was visible.

The second index is named Brand Finance – Nation Brands¹² and takes, naturally, a more economic perspective, stemming from the GDP growth, trading conditions, and statistics, but also some societal, political, and governance factors. For instance, in 2016

⁹ S. Anholt, *From Nation Branding to Competitive Identity – The Role of Brand Management as a Component of National Policy*, [in:] K. Dinnie (ed.), *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*, Elsevier Ltd. 2008, p. 23.

¹⁰ "The Anholt-GfK's Nation Brands Index", [<http://nation-brands.gfk.com/>]

¹¹ J. Wang, *Nation Branding Reconsidered*, USC Center on Public Diplomacy, 12 June 2014 [<http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/nation-branding-reconsidered>]

¹² "The Brand Finance's – Nation Brands", 2017 [<http://brandfinance.com/knowledge-centre/reports/brand-finance-nation-brands-2017/>]

the report highlighted the strengthening of the nation state and juxtaposed it with the value of openness, the exchange of ideas, as well as trends in international and global trade that followed this political tendency. This year it underlines especially “the gradual shift of the global centre of gravity from West to East” and puts an emphasis on the rise of China and a closing gap between the US and China. The US leads the ranking, but grew only by 2%, whereas China grew by 44%. The competition of national brands over their political and economic leverage becomes global as not only Asian but also African and Latin American countries want to have their say in it.

Also, the level of corruption, analysed mainly through the Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index, is broadly taken into account. It influences, for instance, the list of Top 10 Strongest Nation Brands in 2016, led by Singapore – “the cleanest country in Asia”. What is also interesting about Singapore’s leading position is its “superb public transportation system” and “a high quality education system based in English”. The extraordinary result in the category “People and Skills” helped Singapore dominate the Top 10 Strongest Nation Brands also in 2017.

The third index is titled Country Brand Index – Future Brand¹³ and is focused mainly on consumer perceptions across several dimensions: awareness, familiarity, associations, preference, consideration, and decision/visitation. From the perspective of this article, the associations dimension is most interesting as it covers factors such as value system, quality of life, business potential, heritage and culture, tourism, “made in”. The authors of the report claim that not all countries can qualify as brands.

According to their methodology, only 22 out of 75 countries taken into account qualify as “country brands”, which means they have clear competitive advantages. The Top 20 is dominated by developed and/or Western countries, while the United Arab Emirates occupied the 19th position. The results of the report support some remarks mentioned above. Brands associated with Germany by respondents are: Mercedes-Benz, Bayer, VW, Audi, Lufthansa, Siemens, Porsche BMW, but also Adidas. The newest version of the report is devoted to the years 2014-2015. Ukraine was listed as 74th in the ranking, but no analysis was provided.

The fourth ranking does not have “branding” or “brand” in its name, but certainly covers the issue: a comprehensive study titled The Soft Power 30: A Global Ranking of Soft Power 2017¹⁴, with the latest edition published by Portland Communications in July 2017. It focuses on a broad issue of public diplomacy and soft power, where (as stated above) national branding is just an element of the whole picture. The authors of the survey propose an analytical framework divided into objective (government, digital, culture, enterprise, engagement, education) and polling (cuisine, tech products, friendliness, culture, luxury goods, foreign policy, liveability) data. Perception, a key factor in branding, matters especially in the latter, polling part of data. Even though it is authored by a communications company, the report covers broadly last year’s political events and trends, which to a large extent are the point of departure to any further analysis in the survey. Just like all the other reports, The Soft Power 30 is dominated by Western countries. Some positions may be quite surprising though: China on the 25th, the Russian Federation on the 26th, and Turkey on the 30th position. Ukraine is not covered in the report.

¹³ “The Future Brand’s Country Brand Index 2014-2015” [<https://www.futurebrand.com/uploads/CBI2014-5.pdf>]

¹⁴ “The Soft Power 30. A Global Ranking of Soft Power”, 2017 [<https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2017-Web-1.pdf>]

Ukraine's Performance in International Indexes

Taking branding as a point of departure, it needs to be stated that Ukraine was tackled in the Brand Finance – Nation Brands in its 2016 edition – but not in the newest one. In 2016, it was ranked 4th in the 5 Best Performing Nation Brands category. As it was written in the study, the country's economy was well balanced in the conditions of war with Russia over the Donbas and the annexation of Crimea. On the other hand, it was stated that this quite a good performance stemmed from recovering from the dark years of 2014-2015. It is often easier to advance from very low positions than from the higher ones. According to the authors, this proved to be one of the major challenges for the future of Ukraine, especially because it desperately needed an increased international investment. Lack of sustainable FDI has been hampering the development of the country from the very first day of independence following the Soviet Union's collapse.

Even though this report focuses primarily on financial factors, it underlines also the fact that Ukraine remains highly vulnerable to hybrid warfare and information attacks, also due to the resistance in the Ukrainian government towards the development of a communications strategy and tools.

As for other reports, more focused on the economy, the Heritage Foundation, one of the leading conservative think tanks in the US, annually publishes The Index of Economic Freedom¹⁵ that in 2017 gave Ukraine some credit for recent reforms. The rating of Ukraine grew in the majority of

categories, including government integrity, government spending, and trade freedom. The most common word, however, used to describe the economy of Ukraine was “fragile”, meaning that no positive trend and no progress in Ukraine have yet been fully sustainable.

Staying close to the economic factors, one should take notice of the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index¹⁶, with its latest edition published in September 2017. Ukraine was ranked 81st (an upgrade from 85th in the previous edition). It performed badly when it came to institutions (118th), macroeconomic environment (121st), goods market efficiency (101st), and financial market development (120th). However, when it came to “softer” indicators, the situation was quite good and the positive trend was noticeable: health and primary education – 53rd, higher education and training – 35th, market size – 47th, innovation – 61st place.

In World Economic Forum's Global Human Capital Report 2017¹⁷, Ukraine scored even better and took the 24th position (out of 130 ranked countries). In the “capacity” section of the report's typology Ukraine ranked 5th due to its high scores in literacy and numeracy, as well as primary, secondary, and tertiary attainment rates.

These positive human capital trends were confirmed in the Global Innovation Index¹⁸ published by Cornell SC Johnson College of Business, INSEAD Business School, and the World Intellectual Property Organisation. Ukraine was ranked 50th (out of 127 ranked countries). When it came to “hard-core” categories, it performed badly: institutions –

¹⁵ *The Index of Economic Freedom*, The Heritage Foundation [<http://www.heritage.org/index/country/ukraine>]

¹⁶ *Global Competitiveness Report 2017-2018*, The World Economic Forum, 26 September 2017 [<https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-competitiveness-report-2017-2018>]

¹⁷ *Global Human Capital Report 2017*, The World Economic Forum [<https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-human-capital-report-2017>]

¹⁸ *Global Innovation Index 2017* [<https://www.globalinnovationindex.org/>]

101st, infrastructure – 90th, market sophistication – 81st place. However, when it came to softer categories and human capital (especially among the young generation), some countries might have felt jealous of Ukraine's results: human capital and research – 41st, knowledge and technology outputs – 32nd, creative outputs – 49th position.

Another confirmation of high possibilities in Ukrainian human capital can be found in the 2017 edition of The Global Talent Competitiveness Index: Talent and Technology¹⁹, published jointly by INSEAD, the Adecco Group, and the Human Capital Leadership Institute. The general performance of Ukraine was lower than average – the 69th place out of 118 ranked countries. However, Ukraine performed very well in particular categories (and there are 65 indicators in the report), such as: “relationship of pay to productivity”, “migrant stock”, “tertiary enrolment”, “tertiary education expenditure”, “technicians and associate professionals”, “ease of finding skilled employees”, “availability of scientists and engineers”, “workforce with tertiary education”, “senior officials and managers”.

The above-mentioned Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index²⁰ is probably the most often quoted report when it comes to Ukraine. As long as Ukraine does not jump over Russia in this report (and the trend proves truly sustainable), both the economy and the international image of the country will remain weak. In the latest, 2016 edition of the index, both countries occupied a poor 131st place with 29 points, worse than the average for Eastern Europe and Central Asia and much worse in comparison to the

EU and Western Europe category, where Bulgaria had the worst result – the 75th position (globally) and 41 points.

In the circle of rankings that take both the economic and political angles, the Freedom House's Freedom Index²¹ should also be taken into account. In the latest edition of the report, Ukraine ranked as partly free. The recovery from a tremendous turmoil of 2014 and the struggle and efforts in the field of conflict with Russia were acknowledged. However, the failure in implementing a grand anti-corruption reform, as well as a solid and overwhelming position of oligarchs in politics and economy, with the addition of the attacks on the press, made the performance much poorer than it could be. This confirmed the results of the Corruption Perceptions Index.

When it comes to more global, UN reports, one should take into account the Human Development Report annually delivered by the UNDP, one of the most comprehensive reports that serve as a point of departure to many analyses. It includes 122 indicators devoted primarily to living conditions, divided into bigger categories such as health, education, inequality, poverty, as well as work/employment/vulnerability, trade and financial flows, and environmental sustainability.

Together with Armenia, Ukraine is positioned at the 84th place out of the 188 countries ranked in the Human Development Index (the most important part of the Human Development Report). In the years 1990-2015, Ukraine made quite a modest progress in the index (a 5.2% increase in points), for instance: life expectancy at birth increased by 1.3 years and expected years

¹⁹ *The Global Talent Competitiveness Index 2017* [http://www.gtci2017.com/documents/GTCL_2017_web_r3.pdf]

²⁰ *Corruption Perceptions Index 2016*, Transparency International [https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016]

²¹ *Freedom Index 2017*, Freedom House [<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2017>]

of schooling increased by 2.9 years. What is important, “Ukraine’s GNI per capita decreased by about 31.9 per cent” in that time.²² Ukraine ranks below average in the high human development group (where it is ranked), as well as below average for the category of Europe and Central Asia.

Conclusions

Statistics serve only as a point of departure to and background for further analysis. They do not provide investors with enough answers to questions that come to mind if money is to be invested, if a plant is to be built, or if an R&D programme or unit is to be launched in any country. They do say a lot however and may prompt at least some answers.



every single survey devoted to innovation and human capital highlights the great potential that lies in Ukrainian people, especially the young generation

When it comes to the brand of Ukraine, a few observations stem from the above-mentioned data. First of all, the effort of the government to act and implement certain reforms in the times of conflict and turmoil is acknowledged. Second, there is a feeling that some years have been lost or at least the time was not used effectively. The grey zone and corruption stand still in Ukraine. And as long as corruption will be mentioned in any (and every) analysis of Ukraine, no tremendous change and a sustainable and long-lasting

advance in development will take place. Here we focus on development, much broader than the GDP growth. Development based on corruption will not prove sustainable and long lasting, even though the economic growth may be booming.

But third, every single survey devoted to (or at least mentioning) innovation and human capital highlights the great potential that lies in Ukrainian people, especially the young generation. This is good news, especially when the research on the future of work is concerned. Every report in this field underlines that in the age of artificial intelligence, robotics, and the Internet of Things, these are social and soft skills, as well as life-long learning and the open-mindedness of the students and labour force that will decide what the fate of a country will look like. Moreover, it is said that apart from the competition over exports, FDIs, and tourists, talent attraction is to mostly influence the national branding of tomorrow.²³ Therefore, if the government of Ukraine focuses on its people, on their education (from primary to tertiary), on their access to labour market and just salaries (which means also a grand anti-corruption reform and responding to demographic and migration challenges), they will build a national brand that Ukraine needs and can eventually obtain.

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²² *Human Development Report*, UNDP [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/UKR.pdf]

²³ K. Dinnie, et. al., *Why Countries Engage in Nation Branding*, [in:] K. Dinnie (ed.), *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*, Elsevier Ltd. 2008, p. 17.

THE POWER AND THE LIMITS OF COMMUNICATIONS: CASE OF REFORMS IN UKRAINE

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A country's image is a strategic resource of the state, but even communication has its limits. The research analyses the elements and factors that influence the image of a country, including subjective, objective, temporary, and communicative components. Author states that the formation of Ukraine's international image should not occur partially, but should become a component of Ukraine's national policies, which would retain its development vector both on the domestic market and on the external one.

Elements of the State Image

Today, scientists argue that a country's image is a strategic resource of the state. Moreover, it should be noted that opinion exists that "...a targeted policy of forming an attractive image of the state contributes to the protection of its national interests, achievement of foreign policy goals and the creation of an atmosphere of support by the world community for its steps in the international arena".¹

The relevance of the chosen study is due to the fact that Ukraine is now going through a political crisis and, therefore, has the image of a politically fragile state that is on the path to strengthening itself and is seeking membership in the European Union. This is what determines the need for justification of actions by the country's government. The goal is to form an attractive and positive political image of Ukraine.

The political image of a state "is a mental image of a certain country, formed in the minds of citizens and foreign audiences. It is formed in the process of communicative interaction of subjects of economic, social and political life both within and outside the country".² However, the modern image of Ukraine is perceived as a mental image of consciousness, namely as a reflection of Ukrainian realities. For example, the US media present Ukraine in the light of purposeful modelling of reflection of reality; through the prism of the media, a virtual image is shown, consisting of four leading components, which, in essence, form a four-level model of our country's image.

These components are:

1. Primary, pre-processed media materials, which are covered to minimize negative

¹ K. Vazhna, *Динаміка розвитку сучасного іміджу Україна на політичній арені сучасності (Dynamics of the Development of Ukraine's Modern Image on the Current Political Arena)*, "Image", No. 3, 2016, p. 48.

² V. Olshansky, *Образ і реальності: до аспекту аналізу іміджу країни (Image and Realities: To the Aspect of Analysis of the Country's Image)*, "Edges. Journalism", Ed. 15, 2013, p. 88.

information connotations and to enhance positive ones.

2. A model of primary materials prepared by media.
3. Negatively skewed reports, which are broadcast by the media.
4. The result of the work of the audience (that is, the coverage of its own impressions and competence) and the subject of perception, namely the opinion leader, who can independently construct in his or her mind an integral image of the state, based on already proposed models, which are imposed by the media, but take into consideration their own visions, views, and conclusions.

Media experts note that “the political image of the state, which is designed purposefully, has, as a matter of fact, two main addressees: the society inside the country and the world community”.³ It is absolutely clear that each state requires a positive political image that will contribute to its socio-economic and political development and the expansion of relations with the outside world.

One of the main features of the image of Ukraine is functionality. But here it is worth noting that foreign media do not cover such a component as the internal filling of the state image. In our opinion, this is because it is not always advantageous to cover it in the light of the internal processes, as the Ukrainian media seek to strengthen and build solidarity within Ukrainian society, which contributes to overcoming the social and class conflict, especially when there is a war in our country. Furthermore, a positive image of a country strengthens its external functions and impacts. These include:

- the primary active integration into the global information and political community, taking into account a globalized world, and the askew of the state’s image on the world arena, through the prism of its negative connotation, can hypothetically lead to socio-economic cataclysms within the country;
- protection of the country from political and military external pressures (including Ukraine’s cybersecurity in general);
- the strengthening of support for Ukraine by the world community and EU countries;
- strong support of Ukrainian national business, with an infusion of foreign investment, which will strengthen the economic component of the state;
- development of tourism, which will contribute to a powerful influx of tourists and will be able to show the Ukrainian way of thinking and hospitality to the international community;
- protection of Ukrainians abroad.

However, it should be noted that at present, the problem (regarding the practical implementation) of modern media research is the coexistence of the internal and external image. “...The ideal option is the coexistence of both positive images when the social values of a particular country correspond to a system of world values such as ‘human freedom’, ‘world peace’, ‘freedom of speech and conscience’, ‘national sovereignty’”⁴ This is the basis for the image of such powerful countries as the US and Germany.

³ V. Romata, *Українська політична ситуація (Ukrainian Political Situation)*, “Edges. Journalism”, Ed. 15, 2013, p. 90.

⁴ A. Starostina, *Маркетингові дослідження. Практичний аспект (Marketing Research. Practical Aspect)*, Williams: Kiev 1998, p. 166.

Factors that Influence the Image

To analyse the Ukrainian situation, we should pay attention to the fact that contemporaries (political image-makers) have singled out a variety of components for the synthesis of the ideal coexistence of the external and internal images. These include subjective, objective, temporary, and communicative components, which we should study in more detail.

Subjective factors are represented in a formation of the image of the political leader of the state, or the political elite, which is perceived as an integral element of the first component in Ukraine, which produces the image of political institutions of power and political parties.

Objective factors are expressed in the formation of the image of the state's political regime, the image of democracy, or the presence of improvement in social and economic components.

Time factors are formed on cultural and historical facts or existing political events that contribute to the formation of political forecasts.

Communicative factors model the image from the standpoint of communication, that is, the influence of broadcast channels (media and communication media).

In such circumstances, the media, as researchers note, carry out two important and closely related functions in the political sphere: observe political life on behalf of society and ensure representation of the public sphere⁵. Here, attention is paid precisely to the design of the image as a

process, taking into account, first of all, the realities, while forming ideal models (images of friends or enemies). An example is the creation of e-government as a system of systematic interaction between government and society via the Internet.

However, image, as a communication product, is determined by its carrier and the image of the recipient. A favourable image of a state is related to the expectations of the citizens. "It is also conditioned by rational requirements, interests and sociocultural patterns, stereotypes of mass consciousness"⁶. A positive image of a state on the world arena arises when it is oriented towards the mentioned social groups and corresponds to their needs. Processes of a global nature in the sociocultural space within the state can, taking into account image-factors, be clearly traced both in the international and state space, which is political.



image, as a communication product, is determined by its carrier and the image of the recipient

Evaluation of the State Image

"In world practice, the analysis of country brands and the creation of their ratings has become widespread since the middle of the early years of the 21st century, due to the following factors. First, the high development rates of the world economy at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, led to an increase in demand for available investment resources

⁵ P. van Ham, *The Rise of Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation*, "Global Policy", [http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/162/27557.html access: 14 October 2017]

⁶ P. van Ham, *The Rise of Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation*, "Global Policy", [http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/162/27557.html access: 14 October 2017]

from dynamically growing countries”⁷. On the other hand, the political elite tries to influence the volume of investments aimed at developing trade between countries, and this dictates the conditions for maintaining the country’s image on the world stage. For example, the US boasts USD 1.4 billion, the United Kingdom – USD 1.2 billion, France – USD 3.1 billion⁸, Saudi Arabia – USD 6 billion⁹.

Here it should be noted that to study a country’s image, it is worth relying on projects on the country rating that have become increasingly popular in the world since 2005. For example, the Country Brand Index (CBI), the national brand index by Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index (NBI), or FutureBrand, which now operate in accordance with their own methods.

According to modern day experts (A. Starostina, G. Lychov, V. Kravchenko, etc.), the strength of the country brand, according to the methodology of FutureBrand, is affected by the state of affairs in the following areas of the country’s socio-economic life: tourism, historical heritage and culture, business, the quality of life, values system. To assess the country brand, FutureBrand uses a three-level system based on a global quantitative study, expert interviews, and analysis of relevant statistical data.¹⁰

We suggest a detailed study of this method since we consider it valid for implementation with regard to the image of Ukraine. Specialists note that at the first stage all statistics and information of an

analytically factual nature in the media are collected and prepared. Researchers are interested in the country’s potential and the pace of introducing something new that will be of public importance. Analytics allows us to determine the dynamics of changes over a certain period and introduce something more powerful and more constructive to improve the image of Ukraine.

In the second stage, there are various kinds of assessments of the attributes of Ukraine’s image on the world arena and brand strength indicators. In our case, we are talking about such aspects of coverage by foreign media as:

- a) awareness of the existence of Ukraine (significantly increased over the past 15 years);
- b) associations arising from mentioning the name of our state;
- c) the level of foreign support for our country;
- d) the desire to visit Ukraine;
- e) personal recommendation of foreign citizens to visit Ukraine.

To ensure the above tasks, the media conduct an international survey of foreign respondents. For example, the US edition of the Washington Post¹¹ notes that 3,800 respondents from 30 countries of the world participated in their internal survey

⁷ A. Starostina, *Міжнародний імідж країни: практичні аспекти аналізу (Country’s International Image: Practical Aspects of Analysis)*, “Marketing in Ukraine”, No. 3, 2011, p. 52.

⁸ The Marketing of Nations. *A Strategic Approach to Building National Wealth* by Philip Kotler, Somkid Jatusripitak and Suvit Maesincee, “The Free Press”, New York, 2017 [http://www.bizsum.com/articles/art_themarketing-of-nations.php access: 14 October 2017]

⁹ W. Olins, *Hull: Pioneering City, Case Study, 2016* [www.wolffolins.com/files/Hull_0202New access: 16 October 2017].

¹⁰ A. Starostina, *Міжнародний імідж країни: практичні аспекти аналізу (Country’s International Image: Practical Aspects of Analysis)*, “Marketing in Ukraine”, No. 3, 2011, p. 56.

¹¹ “Washington Post” [https://www.washingtonpost.com/ access: 16 October 2017].

of a statistical study on Ukraine (events in Ukraine) in 2016, and the survey was conducted online. They were people aged 20-60 who systematically travel and have an opportunity to visit Ukraine.

Here it should be noted that it is the results of quantitative sociological research – considering the opinions and impressions of the respondents – that are the basis for Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) calculations and that enabled the assessment of constituent components of attributes in CBI in 2017. According to CBI, analysis of the image of Ukraine was carried out according to the following mechanism: The rating scale ranged from 1 to 10 (where 1 is bad, and 10 is excellent). The first component was people; the second one was a product, namely tourist attractions of Ukraine, sports, trade, etc.; the third component was the state of media resources, including advertising communication; the fourth component analysed the environments, including events, conferences, and infrastructure.

In the third stage, the evaluations of the proposed specialists and experts, who systematically contribute to the development of the international image of countries around the world, are processed. In 2017, 62 experts were surveyed (in 2005, there were 35 of them). They are specialists in the field of tourism and officials. The results of this type of analytics are used to identify trends in the development of the image of the state in general.

The formation of Ukraine's international image should not occur partially, but should become a component of Ukraine's national policies, which would retain its development vector both on the domestic market and on the external one. Peter van Ham points out that "the main foreign policy department

of the state is the foreign affairs body, which plays a leading role in shaping the international image in many countries of the world. The importance of the factors of influence will differ significantly depending on the purpose of forming the image of the country".¹² Therefore, we should consider that previously the development of Ukraine's positive world image was dulled by the factor of corruption, entry barriers to the country's market, the investment climate, etc.



The formation of Ukraine's international image should not occur partially, but should become a component of Ukraine's national policies, which would retain its development vector both on the domestic market and on the external one

To develop an attractive image, it is necessary to focus on improving the infrastructure of the state, preserving cultural and historical monuments, etc. Both the domestic and foreign policies of Ukraine will influence the stimulation of exports, which will develop the country's economy and will facilitate its entry into the EU.

The Image of Ukraine in Foreign Media

Therefore, it is worth noting that, while examining the specifics of the implementation of methods for assessing the international image of Ukraine in foreign media, one should adhere to several dominant factors. The first one is the widespread use of systematic analysis and research of Ukraine's ratings. This will help to increase the level of competition in our market, support the

¹² P. van Ham, *The Rise of Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation* [<http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/162/27557.html> access: 14 October 2017]

economy and investment resources in the international market. Secondly, it is necessary to analyse and develop the country's tourism industry, which will contribute to positive feedback on the Internet from foreigners who have already visited us and gave us good endorsements. Thirdly, the analysed results of the international study of the image of countries and the pilot online survey of respondents from different countries confirmed the hypothesis presented by us. Fourth, foreign policy factors are now the leading factors in shaping Ukraine's international image. "The long-term ignoring of the Ukrainian factor by Western media was replaced by a concentrated observation of this fragment of the post-Soviet space, where a political crisis unfolded, which took the form of a power collision between alternative visions of the present and the future".¹³

It is worthwhile focusing attention during the research on which specific media outlets (from the countries surveyed by us) pay attention to coverage of the image of Ukraine and in what way. It should be noted that on the pages of foreign websites we find certain elements of contradictions in the coverage of the fight for a positive image of Ukraine. Many reports are aimed at covering the military conflict. "The conflict between a desired and real models of Ukraine's external perception reflects a deep distance between the competing types of public self-esteem in Ukraine that are characteristic of certain groups of political and intellectual elites".¹⁴

The coverage of information about Ukraine in foreign media outlets in recent years can be divided into the following topics:

- the Ukrainian political crisis and its consequences;

- Ukraine and spheres of influence on it, namely of Russia and the United States;
- Russia and Ukraine—zones of alienation and rapprochement;
- the Ukrainian government and its work;
- Myths vs. Facts: Ukrainian corruption;
- reforms in Ukraine and the path for joining the EU;
- criminal Ukraine;
- military Ukraine.

The traditional image of Ukraine, which now dominates in the North American online media (Globe and Mail, Washington Post, Bloomberg) is that of a tired state and people who, since the time of the Revolution of Dignity, are fighting for their freedom: "Instead of being proud and independent, we rather see Ukraine in the image of a tired miner, who slowly, but confidently is moving out of the darkness and into the light, forward to the next happiness," notes the Globe and Mail (2015). The traditional topic for the US media about the content of Ukrainian media is also highlighted by the state of press freedom, the Ukrainian media aspect in general.

When analysing German media (for example, *Suddeutsche Zeitung*), we see a tendency of support and a positive attitude towards the possible entry of Ukraine into the EU and, therefore, the formation of a positive image of our state.

Polish media cover the media industry in Ukraine from the standpoint of distancing itself from existing and accepted standards

¹³ O. Butyrsky, *Україна у дзеркалі західних ЗМІ (Ukraine in the Mirror of Western Media)*, "Scientific Notes of the Institute of Journalism", No. 17, 2016, p. 77.

¹⁴ O. Butyrsky, *Україна у дзеркалі західних ЗМІ (Ukraine in the Mirror of Western Media)*, "Scientific Notes of the Institute of Journalism", No. 17, 2016, p. 78.

and moving in the European direction, changing and becoming more democratic. For example, the Polish edition of *Rzeczpospolita* highlights Ukraine's attitude not only towards economic but also social and political problems. In the European Union section, attention is often focused on the reforms in Ukraine and the terms that we comply or fail to comply with (21 articles in total). In most cases, the coverage of the problems of European integration of Ukraine covers 23% of the total number of articles of both a positive and negative nature. The Political Struggle category (where we analysed 18 articles) tells us about the problems of the Ukrainian judicial system, reforms. Attention is paid to the current medical reform. This section contains both positive and negative feedback about us, which statistically came to 13% positive, 5% negative. The Political Activities section has counted 16 articles that described modern Ukrainian rallies and meetings, focusing on the fact that we still have a calm environment and people continue to fight for freedom (it was about rallies on Independence Square and about new tent camps). Here are 12 articles, five of which are strongly negative, and seven are positive.

Conclusions

It is worth noting that during the study we came to the conclusion that the primary source of changes in opinions regarding Ukraine is the existence of the profound reforms currently taking place in our country. This leads to economic, cultural, and other aspects of the country's activities, which is reflected in the media. Experts are now predicting that this will have a positive discourse in foreign media and, consequently, will result in the country's positive image. Ukraine finds itself at a new stage in the formation of its image, which brings with it radical changes but still has a number of contradictions in the various information fields of countries. PR actions alone are not enough to improve the situation in Ukraine. The country needs to restructure the system itself, and not just the information field.

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COMBINING HARD AND SOFT POWER: HOW TO ALTER THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS UKRAINE

Lesia Kuruts-Tkach
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Ukraine, suffering the war for three years now, has not cemented its image in the world. On the one hand, a lot has been said about Ukraine in the context of Russian military aggression; on the other, the image of Ukraine in this regard did not become winning: Not completely free, but with spirit; not quite reformed, but trying to change; creative, but unaware of its own strengths; close to, but different from Russia, Belarus, and Eastern Europe.

What is Ukraine really like and what can make it attractive to the world? How to highlight the achievements of the state and why is it not desirable to bring domestic disputes to European or American airing? Ukraine's role in the world agenda is definitely not pivotal, but it is a mistake to sideline Ukraine. This article provides an assessment how combined hard and soft power can affect the formation of the county's image and further international relations.

The second season of the American TV series "Designated Survivor" begins with an episode when Ukrainians are capturing a Russian plane with Americans on board. The US president asks to arrange a meeting with the ambassadors of Russia and Ukraine in order to resolve this issue somehow. In one of the scenes, he says that Ukrainians are really tired of confronting Russia and the US should eventually intervene in this issue.

This is one of the episodes of modern cinema when Ukraine is mentioned, without going deep into its internal affairs, but already as a separate entity that can hold off Russia's aggression for more than three years. The information component of the image of a state is extremely important, especially in times of information technology and the Internet. Mass media, in general, are the main way for the promotion of information

aimed at a large, heterogeneous audience, usually separated by spatial and temporal barriers.

Social Perceptions

For the search term "Ukraine", the Google search engine suggests more than half a million references. We have analysed 25 informational messages published between 28 October and 18 November 2017 (the author takes into account English-language international media, where, according to the Similar Web, engagement exceeds 20 million per month). The media that were taken into account are: Voice of America, Reuters, Los Angeles Times, Fortune, EUobserver, Independent, Financial Times, The Daily Signal, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Business Insider, The Diplomat, The Economics Times, Daily Mail, BBC (US

and Canada), Politico, BBC (London), Dutch News, The Guardian, The Washington Post, Aljazeera, Atlantic Council, Euronews, Foreign Policy.

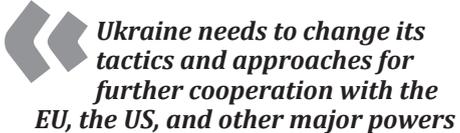
The key topics of articles related to Ukraine were: corruption (mentioned in two media sources), crime, cyber attacks, Eastern Partnership (mentioned in two media sources), fake news, hybrid war (mentioned in two media sources), Manafort case, economics, renewable energy, sports, Ukrainian brewery, war (mentioned in 11 media sources). As we can see, the image of Ukraine as a country experiencing war is firmly established in the world media. On the other hand, knowledge about Ukraine among Europeans is almost the same and not at all rich in new data or achievements.

According to a survey conducted by the Institute of World Policy in 2015¹, most Europeans associate Ukraine with bribes, war, and poverty. Answering the question: “Which arguments can you give against Ukraine’s membership in the EU?”, 35% of those polled said that Ukraine must first fight corruption, 26% – to get rid of oligarchs; another 22% considered Ukraine poor, therefore its inclusion would be a burden for the EU. At the same time, the firm prejudice that EU enlargement will lead to a wave of migration or destabilization of the economy was supported by only 1% of Europeans.

Mostly, Europeans explained the need for Ukraine to join the EU as “Ukraine is a

part of Europe” (31%), “Ukraine should be protected from the Russian Federation” (30%), and “There is no reason to deny Ukraine the prospect of membership, which was given to others” (30%).

According to the 2017 poll, the idea of Ukraine’s membership in the EU was most supported in Lithuania and Poland (68% and 67% respectively), the least in the Netherlands (27%). Support levels in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom



Ukraine needs to change its tactics and approaches for further cooperation with the EU, the US, and other major powers

were less than half of the respondents. “Those who oppose the membership of Ukraine in the EU, have different reasons. A third of those polled believe that the EU at this stage cannot afford further expansion, and the same number (31%) believe that Ukraine’s adoption will provoke economic problems for the European Union.”²

Obviously, Ukraine needs to change its tactics and approaches for further cooperation with the EU, the US, and other major powers. But even this “transitional image” could add bonuses to Ukraine, because the country has modern military equipment (during 2014-2017, the Ukrainian army received more than 15,000 units of weapons and military equipment³), servicemen with

¹ *Україна очима європейців: стереотипи та несподівані оцінки*, “European Pravda”, 24 June 2015 [http://www.euointegration.com.ua/articles/2015/06/24/7035179/ access 04 July 2015]

² *58% Europeans Support Ukraine’s Joining NATO, and 48% Are for Ukraine’s Joining the European Union: Findings of an Opinion Poll by KANTAR PUBLIC, Commissioned by Yalta European Strategy (YES), “YES”* [https://yes-ukraine.org/en/news/58-yevropeytsiv-pidtrimuyut-vstup-ukrayini-do-nato-48-vstup-ukrayini-do-yevropeyskogo-soyuzu-rezultati-sotsiologichnogo-doslidzhennya-kantar-public-na-zamovlennya-yaltinskoyi-yevropeyskoyi-strategiyi access 16 September 2017]

³ *Інновації – відповідь “Укроборонпрому” на виклики гібридної війни, “UkrOboronProm”* [http://ukroboronprom.com.ua/uk/media/innovatsiyi-vidpovid-ukroboronpromu-na-vyklyky-gibrydnoyi-vijny.html access 01 September 2017]

practical skills (according to the Global Firepower rating of the world's military forces⁴, Ukraine ranks 30th in the world and 8th among European armies⁵); its civil movement and civil society are considerably developed.

The Freedom House analytical note titled "Nations in Transit 2017" states:

Civil society remains the strongest element in Ukraine's democratic transition. It plays a crucial role in driving reforms aimed at building a functional democracy and rule of law. Civil society coalitions and networks, such as the Reanimation Package of Reforms, help drive reforms through drafting and advocating legal acts, and communicating vital reforms to the media and wider society. Civil society actors continue to play a vital role in the implementation of various reforms, such as countering corruption (by direct engagement in the establishment of new anticorruption bodies and promotion of the e-declarations launch), public administration and civil service reform (through participating in the commissions and nominating new civil servants), public procurement reform (by supporting the introduction of the "ProZorro" e-procurement system), and decentralization and local governance (through capacity-building in the amalgamated communities).⁶

What Else Can Ukraine Present to the World?

British journalist Hugh Morris from the Telegraph⁷ named at least 25 facts that, in his opinion, could affect the Europeans and change the stereotyped attitude towards Ukraine. Speaking about the achievements of Ukraine, which with the help of soft power can show Ukraine from a different angle, one can distinguish the following:

IT Specialists

The Ukrainian segment of IT in Europe, the US, as well as in the Eastern countries exceeds 15,000 specialists. Foreign investments in Ukrainian start-ups amount to more than \$1 billion. A recent example of this – a record amount for this market segment – was an investment of \$5 million in a start-up by Ukrainians. The leading IT industry magazine Tech Crunch⁸ wrote about the services of 25-year-old Stas Matvienko and his team that have already been widely used in San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles. Allset – that is the name of the service – raises \$5 million to help restaurants deliver a more efficient dining experience.

Another example is Clickky – the largest independent mobile marketing platform in Eastern Europe, founded by Ukrainians in 2010, which is already actively used in Europe, Israel, India, China, and the United States. The main focus of the company is

⁴ 2017 Military Strength Ranking, "Global Firepower" [<https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>]

⁵ Українська армія поднялась на 8-е место в Европе (Ukrainian Army Has Reached the 8th Place in Europe), "ICTV", 19 April 2017 [<http://fakty.ictv.ua/ru/ukraine/20170419-ukrayinska-armiya-pidnyalas-na-8-e-mist-se-v-yevropi/>]

⁶ Nations in Transit 2017: The False Promise of Populism, Freedom House, 2017 [<https://freedomhouse.org/article/nations-transit-2017-false-promise-populism> access 03 April 2017]

⁷ 25 Things You Didn't Know about Ukraine, Birthplace of the Biggest Plane Ever Built, "Telegraph" [<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/ukraine/articles/amazing-fact-you-probably-didnt-know-about-ukraine/> access 24 August 2017]

⁸ Allset Raises \$5M to Help Restaurants Deliver a More Efficient Dining Experience, "Tech Crunch", 17 October 2017 [<https://techcrunch.com/2017/10/17/allset-series-a/>]

to attract new users and monetize mobile applications. The annual turnover of Clickky is \$50 million.

On 19 October 2017, the Global Sourcing Association (GSA)⁹ named Ukraine the Offshoring Destination of the Year 2017. At the same time, it is clear that the promotion and strengthening of the very same IT brand of Ukraine in the world needs joint efforts. Many foreign specialists note that, despite the high quality of work, Ukrainian companies lack soft skills: knowledge of English because of the old education system, and the culture of communication, which often leads to loss of customers.

Ukrainian Music

Rock, alternative, electro, and metal – all sounds very well in Ukrainian. The number of young music bands playing high-quality music abroad grows more and more. For example, the band “DahaBraha” is called the ambassador of Ukraine¹⁰ to the world. Ukrainian musicians perform in Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, the United States, Canada, China, Malaysia, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and most of Europe. The “Vidlik” EP by ONUKA has been featured in music charts of many European countries. Within a few days of the launch, the mini-album got to the top of iTunes electronic charts in Britain, Poland, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and even Australia.

Ukrainian Fashion

It is no secret that Ukrainian embroidery has been the main trend in the collections of world-renowned designers for several years already – collections by Jean-Paul Gaultier¹¹ or Gucci were well accepted by critics.¹² Despite this, Ukrainian designers increasingly make themselves heard in the world media. Collections by Lilia Pustovit are featured in the famous concept store of London’s Dover Street Market, the Seoul 10 Corso Como; the Litkovskaya brand is currently sold at L’clairleur (Paris), Rare Market (Seoul), Shuwalkh (Kuwait), Selfridges (London), Nordstrom (Chicago, San Francisco). Vita Kin’s embroidered shirts became a discovery for many Hollywood actors. The Telegraph called her brand a hit of summer 2017.

Artists

Artist Ivan Marchuk in 2007 was included in the British “Top 100 living geniuses” list.¹³ Paintings of Odessa artist Oleksandr Roitburd were exhibited at the New York Museum of Contemporary Art, and his work “Farewell, Caravaggio” is considered the most expensive (\$97,500) Ukrainian work of art.¹⁴ Another contemporary, well-known abroad, is Ilya Chichkan. He is a brilliant representative of the new wave of the Ukrainian art. His works are often exhibited in Ukrainian galleries. His art is highly valued in Europe. One of his paintings “It” was sold in 2008 for 37,000 pounds.¹⁵

⁹ *GSA UK Awards Shortlist Announcement*, GSA [http://www.gsa-uk.com/files/1224.pdf accessed 17 October 2017]

¹⁰ DakhaBrakha. SFJAZZ. Alice @97.3. http://events.radioalice.cbslocal.com/sanfrancisco_ca/events/dakhabrakha/E0-001-103852058-7

¹¹ *Inspired by Ukraine, Jean-Paul Gaultier’s Collection*, “Ukraine Good News” [http://ukrainegoodnews.com/inspired_by_ukraine-jean-paul_gaultiers_collection.html access 01 January 2015]

¹² *Ukrainian Trends in World Fashion*, “Travel West Ukraine”, 2009 [http://www.travelwestukraine.net/2009/03/ukrainian-trends-in-world-fashion.html]

¹³ *Top 100 Living Geniuses*, “Telegraph” [http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1567544/Top-100-living-geniuses.html access 28 October 2008]

¹⁴ *Oleksandr Roitburd’s Exhibition in Kiev*, “Destinations”, 27 April 2016 [http://destinations.com.ua/art/oleksandr-roitburds-exhibition-in-kiev]

¹⁵ *Contemporary Art Day Sale*, Phillips, 30 June 2008 [https://www.phillips.com/detail/ILYA-CHICHKAN/UK010408/317?fromSearch=chichkan&searchPage=1]

On the other hand, the Revolution of Dignity as a social movement has helped Ukrainian artists both to earn more and to remind once again that Ukraine has something to show the world in terms of art. In 2014, at Sotheby's auction in London, Ukrainian works sold for a total of \$101,800. Ukrainian artists for the first time took away almost a third of all sales. And at the Phillips auction in London – one of the leading auctions of the world – the paintings of Ukrainian artists were sold for more than \$360,000. One of the most important shifts was the separation of Ukrainian art from Russian into the special section of Contemporary East. Before that, Ukrainian lots were shown in the section of Russian ones.



The combination of internal and external factors should become the basis for the formation of a new image of Ukraine – a country that, despite the war in the east, the annexation of Crimea, difficult economic situation, poverty, and corruption, has all the grounds for the creation of an attractive brand

Nowadays the number of Ukrainian artists who sell well gets bigger and bigger. And sometimes well-known young artists even outstrip the classics.

What Strategy Should Ukraine Develop By Implementing Hard And Soft Power?

The combination of internal and external factors should become the basis for the formation of a new image of Ukraine – a country that, despite the war in the east, the annexation of Crimea, difficult economic situation, poverty, and corruption, has all the grounds for the creation of an attractive brand. Obviously, a very clear and structured state image campaign is needed for this.

Having gotten through two revolutions in the past 15 years, the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity, we must show not only our power in the pursuit of change but also the change – from the consciousness and readiness of the citizens to start reforms to political will and state systemic changes. Ukraine has and can show the world the diversity of its spiritual world, the original palette of a rich ethnic culture of the nation, modern achievements in science, art, sports, encouraging foreigners to perceive the country in a new way.

We need to make good use of available resources and properly deliver the information to the world, basing it on the following indicators.

The issue of creating a positive image of Ukraine in the world remains open, and, consequently, there remains a considerable layer of work for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Ministry of Culture, Office of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Ministry of Information Policy. It is necessary to increase the financing of the above-mentioned state structures, to have a clear plan of strategic communication among the relevant authorities, public organizations, and the population.

An important direction of Ukraine's foreign policy should be the active promotion of information on the potential and prospects of Ukraine's development, positive changes in the society, and the advantages of the Ukrainian market. The image diplomacy of the state, along with public and cultural diplomacy, is one of the main means of forming a positive image of the state abroad and allows for using its own soft power efficiently. The Ukrainian government must finally understand that we need to act in a pre-emptive manner, not waiting for stabs in the back from our neighbours or partners, but demonstrating our own national idea, a firm stand on the issues of the historical past

and future development, and advocating our strengths.

And finally, it should be clear that every product, project, or initiative must be client-oriented, regardless of whether it is about the war in the east, economic changes, or, for example, the presentation of a book abroad. The phrase “United we stand, divided we fall” must become crucial and unify all manifestations of Ukrainian identity.

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UKRAINE'S IMAGE OF "IN-BETWEEN-NESS": BAD LUCK OR LACK OF POLITICAL DETERMINATION?

Dr. Nadiia Bureiko

Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism"

Since gaining independence, Ukraine has been stuck between the Western and Eastern integration initiatives. This has been visible from both the multifaceted judgment employed in the foreign policy decision-making and the similar domestic multi-vector behaviour that influenced the image of Ukraine as being "split" in-between. On top of that, the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, which sparked the most serious crisis between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War, has considerably affected the sensitive positioning of Ukraine in the "inbetweener" environment. The present paper inquires how Ukraine's image of "in-between-ness" has been transposed and evolved into a stereotyped image and whether this image is based upon valid explanations.

Introduction

Ever since gaining independence, Ukraine has undergone political, economic, and social transformations and sought to enhance its regional and international actorness. However, most of its endeavours in foreign and domestic milieu were complicated by political uncertainty, economic and social challenges of the post-Soviet legacy.

Regional differences across Ukraine ranging from spoken languages, historical memory to popular voting patterns and foreign policy preferences have fomented a persistent perception of national "in-between-ness". As such, Ukraine has found itself "self-searching" for a national identity and also foreign policy orientation. Unlike the clear European path embraced by the Central-

Eastern European countries (CEECs) of the ex-communist bloc, Ukraine has been constantly gravitating between the Western and Eastern integration initiatives without fully joining any of them. In spite of the official rhetoric favouring a "European choice", Ukraine has failed to employ efficient tools for undergoing a profound transformation "into a fully European country, measured by stability and prosperity, rather than just a country which is located in Europe".¹ By falling into the "trap" of a multifaceted foreign policy, Ukraine's "inbetweener" position has been equally translated in a domestic multi-vector behaviour.

The present paper inquires how Ukraine's sensitive "in-between-ness" has been transposed and evolved into a stereotyped image and whether this image is based upon

¹ J. Tedstrom, *The EU and Ukraine: A Transatlantic View*, [in:] A. Lewis (ed.), *The EU and Ukraine: Neighbours, Friends, Partners?*, The Federal Trust: London 2001, p. 33.

valid explanations. In particular, this paper points out under which circumstances “in-between-ness” characterizes the Ukrainian foreign policy outlook and how Ukraine’s self-assigned role of a “bridge”² is mirrored in Ukrainians’ public perceptions.

Dual Contextuality of “In-between-ness”

Since the early 1990s, Ukraine has been captured in a dual contextuality of both space and time.³ Such contextuality stems from both historical and geographical influences, which also affected the societal level. Being positioned at the junction between the East and West, which respectively nominated two centres of regional power – Russia and the Euro-Atlantic community (namely, spatial “in-between-ness”), and also between its Soviet past and desired European future (namely, temporal “in-between-ness”), Ukraine has undergone a complicated self-searching process at both the external and internal level.

According to Parker’s model⁴, countries positioned in-between may hold sway over much more powerful centres, sometimes by playing one centre off another or by gaining loyalty rewards (for not moving too much to the other centre). As a result, the marginal states might be constrained to follow a constant oscillation between centres, given that “inbetweeners” frequently attempt to bargain their geopolitical positions and/or follow more than one centre.



Regional differences across Ukraine ranging from spoken languages, historical memory to popular voting patterns and foreign policy preferences have fomented a persistent perception of national “in-between-ness”

Thus, from a spatial perspective, Ukraine’s “in-between-ness” stems from its geographical position and from an ambiguous geopolitical context. A country at the crossroads, a bridge or a buffer between the East and West, a pendulum shifting between two regional powers, etc. were notable “buzzwords” in public discourses and policy papers focusing on Ukraine. By and large, gateways, borderlands or faultlines, battlegrounds for geopolitical manoeuvring, in-between regions are portrayed “as barriers or corridors, no-man’s land or vital buffers between empires, states and spheres” where “distinct traditions coexist and/or clash”.⁵ Moreover, they can become “a target, and the victim of power thrusts and power projections of other – be they Ottomans, Germans, Russians...”⁶

From the temporal perspective of dual contextuality, numerous observations have continuously portrayed Ukraine as a post-Soviet country that has been stuck in its Soviet past, while political, economic, and social reforms were hindered by Ukraine’s Soviet heritage. In this temporal

² The self-assigned definition of a “bridge” was for the first time used in the 1993 Decree of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine “On the Main Directions of Foreign Policy of Ukraine”.

³ G. Ekiert, S. Hanson, *Time, Space and Institutional Change in Central and Eastern Europe*, [in:] G. Ekiert, S. Hanson (ed.), *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe: Assessing the Legacy of Communist Rule*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2003, p. 17.

⁴ N. Parker, *A Theoretical Introduction: Spaces, Centers, and Margins*, [in:] N. Parker, (ed.), *The Geopolitics of Europe’s Identity: Centers, Boundaries and Margins*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan 2008, p. 12.

⁵ A. Peterson, *Regions In Between: Europe, NATO and the Geopolitics of Shifting Frontiers*, “Turkish Policy Quarterly”, 2008, 7 (2), p. 60.

⁶ J. Rothschild, *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe since World War II*, Oxford University Press: New York 1993, p. 263.

“in-between-ness”, a salient role is given to the so-called turning points or crucial junctures (as Euromaidan became for Ukraine) – events that have a strong impact on the society and the state. Such events may alleviate the risk of being entrapped in-between, foster transformations and reforms, and deal with constraints on institutional, social, or cultural changes.



Ukraine’s “inbetweenner” position persisted when both the EU and Russia developed their integrative initiatives in the common neighbourhood – Eastern Partnership (EaP, 2009), and the 2010 Eurasian Customs Union

Ukraine’s Self-assigned Role of a “Bridge”

In accordance with the 1993 Decree “On the Main Directions of Ukraine’s Foreign Policy” – the first document that defined the top priorities of the newly established Ukrainian state in the international realm, one of the objectives of Ukraine’s external policy was that of a “reliable bridge” between Russia and the CEECs/EU. Among others, the decree underlined the significance of maintaining and developing good relations with both the EU and Russia, whereby Ukraine shall “conclude a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement,

the implementation of which shall become the first step towards its association and, later, full membership in this organisation [the EU]” and concurrently “undertake all measures to translate relations with Russia into good neighbourhood”.⁷ The official multivectorism at the level of the Ukrainian foreign policy was gradually translated into a feeling of “in-between-ness”. It also fuelled a degree of mistrust and uncertainty, which meant that externally Ukraine experienced a series of ebbs and flows in its attempt to develop good relations in its neighbourhood.

Nevertheless, such self-assigned role of a “bridge” and readiness to balance in-between was not sufficiently underpinned by a rigorous cost-benefit analysis. Subsequently, it has gradually seen Ukrainian politicians at odds with each other when seeking to justify different foreign policy choices. For instance, while the Ukraine–NATO Action Plan was strongly supported by the then President Victor Yushchenko, his successor Victor Yanukovych, on the contrary, downplayed the importance of the NATO–Ukraine partnership.⁸ Consequently, under Yanukovych’s presidency, the 2010 Law of Ukraine “On the Foundations of Internal and Foreign Policy” excluded Ukraine’s bid for the NATO membership.⁹

Whereas potential membership in NATO has been generating large disputes both at the political and society level, the European Union integration has been almost unanimously

⁷ *Постанова Верховної Ради України “Про основні напрями зовнішньої політики України” (Decree of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine “On the Main Directions of Foreign Policy of Ukraine)*, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1993 [http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3360-12?test=4/UMfPEGznhh5tk.ZikQA0EBH14IYs80msh8Ie6 access: 22 November 2017].

⁸ The Party of the Regions has been actively opposing Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine; consequently Ukraine was not invited into the Membership Action Plan process (NATO, 2008). Concurrently, the Ukrainian society was also significantly uncertain regarding the defence alliance and demonstrated reluctance towards membership in NATO. Thus, even in the regions strongly favouring the West, support for joining NATO was remarkably lower than support for the EU integration.

⁹ *Закон України “Про засади внутрішньої і зовнішньої політики” (Law of Ukraine “On the Foundations of Internal and Foreign Policy”)*, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2010, [http://zakon0.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2411-17 access: 22 November 2017]. Ukraine’s adherence to the Euroatlantic vector and public support for NATO only resumed after the annexation of Crimea and Russian aggression in Donbas.

welcomed by Ukrainian leadership. As such, the 2010 law clearly defined that one of the main principles of Ukraine's foreign policy is "to ensure integration of Ukraine into the European political, economic, and legal area for the purpose of becoming the member of the European Union". In spite of the lack of consensus among politicians vis-à-vis Ukraine's foreign policy course, the European integration has never been put on the back burner and remained the key aspiration for democratization and reforms.¹⁰

Nevertheless, Ukraine's "inbetweener" position persisted when both the EU and Russia developed their integrative initiatives in the common neighbourhood – Eastern Partnership (EaP, 2009), and the 2010 Eurasian Customs Union. The EaP sought to enhance "a rule-based, future-orientated regime modelled on the European governance model, while appearing not to be engaging in rivalry with Russia within this domain".¹¹ Meanwhile, Russia has been actively promoting the Eurasian initiative as an immediate alternative to the EU integration initiatives. In its attempt to prevent Ukraine from moving westward, the Russian leadership aimed at symbolically reintegrating the former Soviet space and at legitimizing its power. According to this scenario, Ukraine had a pivotal role for the Russian reintegration strategy and has been transformed into "a normative battleground, with Russia trying to dissuade it [Kyiv] from

pursuing an Association Agreement with the EU containing the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area and to join the ECU instead".¹²

Against this backdrop, Ukraine's "in-between-ness" emerged with renewed force at the 2013 Vilnius EaP summit. The Association Agreement (AA) with the EU that was expected to be signed by Ukraine at the summit could have represented the end of Ukraine's external vacillation. In spite of its lack of membership perspective, the AA aimed at opening a new era for Ukraine's relations with the European community, including political association and economic integration. However, moving towards only one centre (namely, the EU) paradoxically reduced "the Ukrainian authorities' possibilities for manoeuvre, and, in the absence of a strategic decision, pushed them to hasty and unreasonable decisions".¹³ Thus, the 2013 Vilnius EaP summit saw at the very last moment president Yanukovych withdrawing from the negotiating table. This constituted a bizarre decision at first sight, since Prime Minister Azarov, a close and loyal ally of the president, was faithfully maintaining the official line: Less than 24 hours previously he had stated that "the planned preparation of the Vilnius summit continues perfectly normally".¹⁴ According to the Economist, the profound reforms demanded by the EU could have meant "breaking the very system that put Mr Yanukovych in power".¹⁵ Thus, the

¹⁰ Remarkably, Ukraine was the first CIS state to sign the *Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)* with the European Union in 1994, which was ratified in 1998; just after the PCA ratification, the then president Kuchma signed "Strategy on Ukraine's Integration with the European Union". The strategy defined the EU membership as Ukraine's long-term strategic goal.

¹¹ R. Dragneva, K. Wolczuk, *Russia, the Eurasian Customs Union and the EU: Cooperation, Stagnation or Rivalry?*, "Chatham House Briefing Paper", 2012 [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2125913 access: 22 November 2017].

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ V. Chalyi, *Ukraine Between Two Paths of Integration*, "On Wider Europe, Foreign Policy and Civil Society Program", 2012 [www.gmfus.org/file/2765/download access: 22 November 2017].

¹⁴ R. Dragneva, K. Wolczuk, *Ukraine between the EU and Russia: The Integration Challenge*, Palgrave Macmillan 2015, p. 88.

¹⁵ *The Eurasian Tug-of-war: The EU Is Competing with Russia for the Future of Its Eastern Neighbours*, "Economist", 30 November 2013 [<https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21580528-eu-competing-russia-future-its-eastern-neighbours-eurasian-tug-war> access: 6 July 2017].

Vilnius summit and Yanukovich's decision showed how the private interests of Ukraine's political elite take precedence over the official discourse of foreign policy.

Massive manifestations, known as Euromaidan or Revolution of Dignity, immediately ignited across the country to vocally condemn Yanukovich's refusal to sign the AA and to signal Ukrainians' strong support for the EU. The newly elected Ukrainian leadership "constructed a strong link between the nation's renaissance and its historical return to Europe, on the one hand, and the country's associations with the EU, on the other... All this made the soft power of the EU stronger and provided it with some leverage in Ukrainian politics".¹⁶

Thus, the Euromaidan events followed by Russia's aggression, namely the annexation of Crimea and the covert support for the pro-Russian rebels from the Donbas region, put an end to Ukraine's balancing act, since "the EU sought to prevent Ukraine from falling back into the Russian orbit and, to this end, sought to foster effective democracy and efficient markets".¹⁷ The AA was signed on 21 March (the political part) and on 27 June (the economic part) 2014. Prior to the entering into force of the AA (on 1 September 2017), President Petro Poroshenko emphasized that the agreement is "a road map of reforms whereas Ukraine has one road – a wide Euro-Atlantic highway that leads to membership in the European Union...".¹⁸ The answer from the

EU leadership was prompt. Just five days later at a conference of the EU ambassadors in Brussels, European Commission President Jean Claude Juncker underlined that Ukraine "is not 'European' in the sense of the European Union. I saw that my friend [Ukrainian President] Mr. Poroshenko a few days ago did say: 'Here is Ukraine, it is the European Union, and it is NATO.' But for the moment it is neither one nor the other. And I think we do need to bear that in mind".¹⁹

The international community to a great extent continues to perceive Ukraine as "inbetween", since a striking contrast still exists: On the one hand, the country strongly seeks inclusion into the European structures, but, on the other hand, it is unable to fully undertake necessary reforms and to successfully fight corruption. Thus, whilst Ukraine is expecting more incentives from the EU to carry out reforms, the European leadership has a different approach; according to the "more for more principles", the European partners are willing to support Ukraine, provided the country makes the first steps towards internal transformation. According to Lithuania's President D. Grybauskaitė, "stubbornness [to obtain the EU membership perspective] is good, but the most important thing is not guarantees on entering (the EU), but to be stubborn about reforms".²⁰ In the same vein, the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn, ahead of his visit to Ukraine in June 2017 underlined that "reforms pay

¹⁶ V. Samokhvalov, Ukraine between Russia and the European Union: Triangle Revisited, "Europe-Asia Studies", 2015, 67 (9), p. 1374.

¹⁷ T. Graham, R. Menon, J. Snyder, *Ukraine between Russia and the West: Buffer or Flashpoint?*, "World Policy Journal", 34 (1), 2017, pp. 113.

¹⁸ *Виступ Президента під час урочистого заходу «Парад військ» з нагоди 26-ої річниці Незалежності України (President's Address during the Ceremony "Parade of Troops" on the Occasion of the 26th Anniversary of Independence of Ukraine)*, President of Ukraine, 24 August 2017 [<http://www.president.gov.ua/news/vistup-prezidenta-pid-chas-urochistogo-zahodu-parad-vijsk-z-42878> access: 24 November 2017].

¹⁹ *Discours du Président Juncker à la conférence des ambassadeurs de l'UE*, "European Commission", 29 August 2017 [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-17-3001_fr.htm access: 24 November 2017].

²⁰ *Ukraine's Promise of EU Membership Remains Elusive*, "Swissinfo", 24 November 2017 [<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/reuters/ukraine-s-promise-of-eu-membership-remains-elusive/43703302> access: 24 November 2017].

off, as one can see with visa-liberalisation and the Association Agreement. Those reforms have to continue, notably in the fight against corruption”.²¹ Likewise, a report produced by the European External Action Service and the European Commission on 15 November 2017 highlighted that “evaluation of reforms in Ukraine showed considerable progress but there is still a strong need to accelerate implementation to reap full benefits”.²² In fact, the process of domestic change and the pace of the reforms in Ukraine are underperforming. Moreover, the slow anti-corruption mechanisms point out that the rule of law is weak, while the political elites are still immune to judiciary pressure. For instance, the verification of electronic declarations of assets submitted nearly a year ago by public officials is still being sabotaged and, until now, a clear picture of the public incomes does not exist. Consequently, the upcoming annual meeting of the EU-Ukraine Association Council, scheduled on 8 December 2017, will primarily focus on anti-corruption measures and reforms of the judiciary system.

These institutional pitfalls have also been criticized by the Ukrainian civil society, which constantly objected to the lack of progress in reforms. In an open letter to the EU’s leadership, representatives of the Ukrainian civil society signalled that “the more threatening anti-corruption reform becomes to the vested interests of the

political elites, the more resistance and pressure it tends to meet”.²³

All in all, the success of domestic reforms and anti-corruption mechanisms alongside with visible progress in the economic, social, and political spheres will determine Ukraine’s irrevocable departure towards the Euro-Atlantic structures and its ability to overcome the in-between position. However, unless reforms are fully implemented, Ukraine will still remain struck in-between, which could ultimately have devastating effects, challenging Ukraine’s image in the West, where the partners have already started questioning the purpose for Ukraine “to fight for its body in Donbas if it loses its soul to corruption”.²⁴

Regressive “In-between-ness”? The Civic Factor

The “in-between-ness” narrative has had puzzling effects also at the level of the Ukrainian society. For instance, according to data analysis from the surveys conducted by Razumkov Centre, just after the Orange Revolution in 2005, 67.3% of the population in the west and only 18% in the east were welcoming Ukraine’s enhanced cooperation with the EU. Support for closer ties with Russia experienced a reversed trend and was expressed by 57.6% of the population in the east and only 9.7% in the west. Such west-east divide across the country remained

²¹ Johannes Hahn Visits Ukraine: Focus on Anti-corruption, Decentralisation Reforms and EU’s Assistance to the East, European Commission, 31 May 2017 [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/news/johannes-hahn-visits-ukraine-focus-anti-corruption-decentralisation-reforms-and-eus_en access: 22 November 2017].

²² EU Report: Evaluation of Ukrainian Reforms Shows Considerable Progress but Need to Accelerate Implementation to Reap Full Benefits, European Commission, 15 November 2017 [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/news/eu-report-evaluation-ukrainian-reforms-shows-considerable-progress-need-accelerate_en access: 22 November 2017].

²³ Open Letter of the Ukrainian Civil Society to the Leadership of the European Union ahead of the Upcoming Annual Meeting of the EU-Ukraine Association Council on December 8, 2017, “Reanimation Package of Reforms”, December 2017 [http://rpr.org.ua/en/news/open-letter-of-the-ukrainian-civil-society-to-the-leadership-of-the-european-union-ahead-of-the-upcoming-annual-meeting-of-the-eu-ukraine-association-council-on-december-8-2017/ access: 06 December 2017].

²⁴ R. Tillerson, Remarks to NATO-Ukraine Commission, U.S. Department of State, 31 March 2017 [https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2017/03/269359.htm access: 22 November 2017].

almost invariable and became even more contrasting in 2012, when 70.1% in the west and only 11.9% in the east expressed their support for cooperation with the EU, whereas only 7% in the west and 60% in the east opted for stronger cooperation with Russia. The picture had not altered significantly until the annexation of Crimea and Russian aggression in Donbas. However, in 2015, cooperation with the EU reached 82.6% in the west, whilst stronger ties with Russia were only preferred by 0.5%. Even more striking was the observation that the east also showed a similar trend of increased confidence in the EU and diminished support for Russia – 35.8% and 25.9%, respectively.²⁵

 ***the Euromaidan events became in many regards the game changer, particularly since the change in public perceptions vis-à-vis Europe could be rather explained by the negative impact of Russia's aggression against Ukraine***

Concurrently, the self-perception as Europeans is gradually gaining salience within the Ukrainian society. According to the 2013 and 2015 surveys implemented within the international research project “Region, Nation and Beyond: An Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Reconceptualization of Ukraine”, in 2013, 31.7% expressed their European self-identification, whereas in 2015, “European-ness” was reported by

38.6% of respondents.²⁶ Nevertheless, the stronger European feelings hinge on the level of financial welfare and rule of law as well as on the enhancement of democratic values and human rights²⁷, and therefore are linked to the success of the aforementioned reforms.

It would be difficult to assume that the increase of pro-European feelings in Ukraine either resulted from the success of the EU’s soft power or was generated by the Eastern Partnership policy. In earnest, parts of the Ukrainian political elite and society mobilised themselves in order to conclude the AA. However, the Euromaidan events became in many regards the game changer, particularly since the change in public perceptions vis-à-vis Europe could be rather explained by the negative impact of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine.

This has brought about a fundamental alteration also at the level of Ukraine’s national identity, which increasingly moved from an ethnic to a civic one. According to 2015 data, while being asked what it means to be Ukrainian, respondents across the entire country opted for rather civic elements composing their “Ukrainian-ness” – namely, to feel Ukrainian, to follow Ukrainian traditions, to respect political institutions and law, to help compatriots in need, to participate actively in the public life of the country were among top attributes that according to Ukrainian citizens are essential to be Ukrainian.²⁸ Furthermore,

²⁵ N. Bureiko, T. Moga, “Bounded Europeanisation”: *The Case of Ukraine*, [in:] M. Mannin, P. Flenley (eds.), *The European Union and Its Eastern Neighbourhood Europeanisation and Its Twenty-First-Century Contradictions*, Manchester University Press: Manchester 2018 [<http://www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/9781526109095/> access: 22 November 2017].

²⁶ SPSS database, “Ukrainian Regionalism”, 2017 [<http://www.uaregio.org/en/surveys/methodology/> access: 22 November 2017].

²⁷ *Як українці розуміють євроінтеграцію: очікування та настрої суспільства (How Ukrainians Understand Eurointegration: Expectations and Feelings in the Society)*, Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, 2016 [<http://dif.org.ua/article/yak-ukraintsi-rozumiyut-evrointegratsiyu-ochikuvannya-ta-nastroi-suspilstva> access: 22 November 2017].

²⁸ SPSS database, “Ukrainian Regionalism”, 2017 [<http://www.uaregio.org/en/surveys/methodology/> access: 22 November 2017].

it is important to underline that regardless of the ethnic origin or spoken language, Ukrainian self-identification and pro-Ukrainian sentiments are salient across all the country and do not follow anymore the east-west pattern. Thus, according to the 2015 data, 90.8% of respondents reported they felt Ukrainian and 92.5% stated they loved Ukraine.²⁹

The above-mentioned data showed an increasing “civic fibre” of the Ukrainian nation and further indicate that different language preferences or contrasting interpretations of the historical events are merely artificially exacerbated – particularly by politicians for scoring electoral points – and depict regional diversity across the country rather than the stereotyped east-west “split”.

Whither “In-between-ness”?

The image of “in-between-ness” is, by and large, structured upon both external and internal causal chain of events and decisions. Apart from the geopolitical connotations, Ukraine’s “in-between-ness” has been long enhanced by two main factors. First, continuous discrepancy in Ukraine’s declarations of European aspirations and limited efficiency of reforms “on the ground” created a niche for Ukrainian politicians “allowing it to continue rent-seeking while balancing West and East, each of which

treated Kyiv’s integration rhetoric with a heavy dose of scepticism”.³⁰ Provided that reforms, economic progress, fight against corruption are still lagging behind, the public support for the EU can ultimately diminish considering that for Ukrainians the “idea of Europe” epitomizes first and foremost the level of financial welfare and stable prosperous development.

Second, neither the absence of the membership incentive nor the EU’s appreciation of the modest determination of the Ukrainian leadership to commit themselves to reforms played in favour of Ukraine’s attempts to ease the “in-between-ness”. Provided, that reforms are not fully implemented or Ukrainian politicians might still use the in-between narrative in their public discourses, this can negatively influence the image of Ukraine externally and will affect the societal attachments and public loyalties internally.

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²⁹ SPSS database, “Ukrainian Regionalism”, 2017 [http://www.uaregio.org/en/surveys/methodology/ access: 22 November 2017].

³⁰ R. Dragneva, K. Wolczuk, *Ukraine between the EU and Russia: the Integration Challenge*, Palgrave Macmillan 2015, p. 30.

EU VALUE PROMOTION AND THE 'ASSOCIATED' EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD: STATE OF THE ART, LEGITIMACY CHALLENGES, AND PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

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The article explores the state of the EU's value promotion in the 'associated' Eastern Neighbourhood countries (Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia) with a special emphasis on legitimacy challenges, arising due to the current 'overlapping' crises in the EU. The contribution identifies conceptual clarity of foundational values, an emphasis on functional cooperation, stronger linkage among conflict resolution, stabilization, and the rule of law in the Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), and a stronger citizen involvement in the ENP-led initiatives as the major opportunities for the EU to learn from the current crises, intensify its value promotion in the neighbourhood, and strengthen the legitimacy dimension of the ENP.

Introduction

The year 2017 has evidently witnessed a continuous 'endurance test' for the European integration project. The growing support for far-right parties in the parliamentary elections in France, Germany, and Austria; the 'rule of law crises' in Poland and Hungary, tough 'Brexit' negotiations, and an uncertain future of Catalonia are capturing headlines. Noteworthy, all the above phenomena are inextricably linked to the crisis of European foundational values (democracy, human rights, and the rule of law), brought about

by the member states' conflicting views over the immigration and asylum policies. While the Czech parliamentary elections' winner Andrej Babis is seeking a wide anti-immigration coalition¹, it may be a temptation for the German Kanzlerin Angela Merkel to admit: "Wir schaffen das nicht" (We can do it)² and look for a new balance between stability and commitment to the foundational values.

At the same time, the liberal EU suffers from the lasting geopolitical tension with revisionist Russia over the Ukraine crisis.

¹ K. O'Donell, *Anti-immigrant Forces Gain Ground in Europe*, "POLITICO", 22 October 2017 [https://www.politico.com/story/2017/10/22/europe-far-right-czech-election-nationalism-244031]

² "Wir schaffen das" (*We can do it*) is a famous statement, epitomizing Angela Merkel's decision to open borders to migrants and a call for perceiving an influx of refugees as an opportunity, rather than a threat. The statement was first made at the Federal Conference (Bunfeskonzferenz) on 31 August 2015.

In view of Eurosceptics' pressure to lift sanctions over Russia and still existing thoughts about the 'Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok'³, it might be also tempting to sacrifice commitments to international law principles and re-launch the EU-Russia rapprochement. Will the Union endure and continue its value-based Neighbourhood Policy in Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia? Is the Union-in-turmoil still a legitimate value promoter? And what are the opportunities for the EU value promotion in the Eastern Neighbourhood?

Values in the EU Neighbourhood Policy

As a 'value-based' community, the European Union indicates multiple functions values play in its foreign policy in general and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in particular.

1. Constituting and directing the EU identity and power: The concept of legitimacy

Foremost, the commitment to the values "which are generally acknowledged, within the United Nations system, to be universally applicable" serves as the foundation for the Union's international identity and, subsequently, its normative power.⁴ The values' role for the EU and their commonness for its members are stipulated in Art.2TEU, while their 'guiding role' for the Union's external action is provided in Art.21(1) TEU.⁵ Moreover, Art.21(2)(b) TEU grants

the consolidation of the foundational values the status of the objective of the EU's external action.⁶ The above commitments constitute the basis for the EU's normative power. The normative power concept stems from the fact that "the EU is not only constructed on a normative basis, but the concept predisposes the EU to act in a normative way on the international arena".⁷ Its substance is, therefore, represented by the ability to influence norms in third states' domestic policies through multifaceted instruments that range from the unintended diffusion (contagion) to procedural diffusion (institutionalization of relationships with third states).⁸

Legitimacy has always been viewed as a crucial concern for the EU's normative power. A famous Bickerton's discussion on the legitimacy of the EU's normative power is founded upon the Habermasian three sources of political legitimacy: the utilitarian "pragmatic justification", "social norms" justification, and "moral norms" justification.⁹ Overall, the major concerns, already expressed with regard to the legitimacy of the EU's normative power, include the concept's similarity to the EU's self-descriptions, the militarization of the EU's power, as well as the non-universal nature of the promoted values and the Union is hiding self-interest under the mask of values.¹⁰ The above issues tend to seriously harm the 'force for good' brand created by the EU, and will be further addressed in the analysis.

³ HL-15 - *The EU and Russia: Before and Beyond the Crisis in Ukraine*, UK Parliament, London: The Stationery Office Limited, 2015.

⁴ See: I. Manners, *The Normative Ethics of the European Union*, "International Affairs", 84(1), 2008, pp. 46-60.

⁵ Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, Art.2, 21, 2010 O.J. C.83.1, [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012M/TXT&from=en access: 25 August 2017]

⁶ *Ibid*, Art.21.

⁷ H. Sjursen, *The EU as a 'Normative Power': How Can This Be?* "Journal of European Public Policy", 13(2), 2006, pp. 235-251.

⁸ I. Manners, *Normative Power Europe Reconsidered: Beyond the Crossroads*, "Journal of European Public Policy", 13(2), 2006, pp. 182-199.

⁹ C. J. Bickerton, *Legitimacy through Norms: The Political Limits to Europe's Normative Power*, [in:] R. Whitman (ed.), *Normative Power Europe: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011, pp. 25-42.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 40-42.

II. Constituting and directing the EU's relations with the neighbours: The concept of value promotion

Launched following the European Union's 'big bang' enlargement, the ENP was repeatedly addressed in scholarship as one of the EU's most ambitious value-driven normative power exercises.¹¹ Extrapolating its own founding values to the relations with the neighbours, the EU emphasizes the shared nature of the values and their constitutive importance for the special relationship with its neighbours. Subsequently, the 2015 ENP review and the regulation establishing the European Neighbourhood

 **The value promotion can be defined as the Union's purposeful application of a multifaceted toolbox aimed to advance the state of democracy, rule of law, human rights, and further values in non-member states.**

Instrument (e.g., Art.1(4), 2(1), and 2(2)(a) of the ENI Regulation) repeatedly mention the foundational values as objectives and areas of the Union's political dialogue and cooperation with the neighbours, and the Union's promotion activities.¹²

The important concept arising in this regard is value promotion. The value promotion can be defined as the Union's purposeful

application of a multifaceted toolbox (including political dialogue, launching and supporting various forms of cooperation with different stakeholders in a third state, unilateral financial and technical assistance instruments, etc.), aimed to advance the state of democracy, rule of law, human rights, and further values in non-member states.

III. Values in the EU Conditionality Policy: Towards the Undefined

One of the most broadly discussed instruments of the Union's value promotion is its conditionality policy. As argued by Kochenov and Basheska, notwithstanding the neighbours' subscribing to the shared values, the only way to make values operational lies in the application of the conditionality policy, based on the principles of differentiation and incentives and to a large extent borrowing the pre-accession structures.¹³ The key conceptual problem, shared by both the pre-accession and ENP conditionality, deals with the lack of unified benchmarks to assess the state of the foundational values in partner states and monitor respective progress.¹⁴ On the one hand, the Commission's case-by-case assessment of the state of democracy, rule of law, and human rights could be considered a virtue, allowing for a targeted approach to each state and a space for political manoeuvre and changing policy emphases. On the other hand, converting the conditionality policy into a journey towards the undefined implies a higher

¹¹ See, for instance: H. Hiski, *The European Union as a Regional Normative Hegemon: The Case of European Neighbourhood Policy*, [in:] R. Whitman (ed.), *Normative Power Europe: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011, pp. 45-64.

¹² *Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and the European Council of 11 March 2014*, establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument, [<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:077:0027:0043:EN:PDF> access: 10 October 2017]; Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy, Joint Communication from the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 18 November 2015, JOIN 2015 (50), final.

¹³ D. Kochenov, E. Basheska, *ENP's Value Conditionality from Enlargements to Post-Crimea*, "CLEER Papers", 2015/1, pp. 1-24.

¹⁴ D. Kochenov, *The ENP Conditionality: Pre-accession Mistakes Repeated*, [in:] L. Delcour, E. Tulmets (eds.), *Pioneer Europe? Testing EU Foreign Policy in the Neighbourhood*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2008, pp. 105-120.

risk of insufficient thresholds for advancing the EU's relations with a third state, also negatively affecting the Union's credibility of an international value promoter.¹⁵

Actual State of the EU's Value Promotion in the Eastern Neighbourhood

At first sight, the picture of the EU's value promotion in the 'associated' Eastern Neighbourhood countries may seem cloudless: The Association Agreements are operational; the dialogue and cross-border cooperation are intensifying; reforms are being implemented; citizens may experience all the virtues of European values in visa-liberalized and low-cost modes. Nevertheless, a slightly stronger magnification would reveal a number of intertwined problems, challenging the ENP's value promotion and preventing the EU from 'sponsoring' a genuine value-driven change in the neighbourhood.

Issue No 1. Policy 'ends': The lack of a membership perspective for the 'associated neighbours'

As compared to the Enlargement Policy, whose conditionality structures are borrowed by the ENP, the latter policy offers insufficient incentives for Eastern neighbours. Subsequently, in view of the high adoption costs, the neighbourhoods' governments prefer to conduct half-hearted 'cosmetic' reforms, rather than change the existing rules of the game. The issue of incentives is especially topical at this stage of the EU-neighbourhood relations, given the exhaustion of major incentives,

such as the launch of political Association, free trade, and free travel. The brightest example in this regard is Ukraine, which announced the striving for the Customs Union with the EU immediately after the Association Agreement's full entrance into force on 1st September 2017. Ukraine's seeking new incentives under the high costs of its European choice, stemming from the Russian aggression, testifies to the urgent need for the Union to develop new incentives for the value promotion in the region and increasing the speed of transition.¹⁶ New incentives targeting various stakeholders in the neighbourhood are also required due to the need to preserve and strengthen the 'utilitarian' and 'social preferences' dimensions of the EU's legitimacy in the neighbourhood.

Issue No 2. The lack of values' conceptualization under the ENP

As it was previously mentioned, the EU's reluctance to convert values into feasible standards makes it hard for the neighbours to systemically improve their adherence to such values. Moreover, the lack of respective standards means difficulties in ensuring objective assessment and monitoring of the state of the rule of law in partner countries, low thresholds for the foundational values¹⁷, and suffering legitimacy of the Union's value promotion. Thus, specifying the ends to be achieved by the partner countries is essential for the Union, along with introducing new policy incentives.

Issue No 3. Self-serving elites and weak institutions in the neighbourhood: The EU's communication with them

¹⁵ I. Ioannides, G. C. Celador, *The Internal-External Security Nexus and EU Police/Rule of Law Missions in the Western Balkans*, "Conflict, Security and Development", 2011, pp. 415-445; R. Youngs, Normative Dynamics and Strategic Interests in the EU's External Identity, "Journal of Common Market Studies", Vol. 42(2), 2004, pp. 415-435.

¹⁶ For the discussion regarding the speed of transition in the Eastern Neighbourhood, see: J. Langbein, T. Börzel, *Introduction: Explaining Policy Change in the European Union's Eastern Neighbourhood*, "Europe-Asia Studies", 2013, pp. 571-580.

¹⁷ See fn.14.

Despite the EU's efforts to reform the neighbourhood, domestic elites oppose the promotion of the operational rule of law institutions, such as an independent judiciary, functioning law enforcement agencies, and an effective public administration. As formulated by K. Hrant in his analysis of the Moldovan 'failing European integration', weak institutions "form the breeding ground for capture by oligarchs who have infiltrated Moldovan politics".¹⁸ Subsequently, despite 'cosmetic' reforms, directed at securing donor aid, Moldova hardly made any progress toward the rule of law. Interestingly, analysing the Moldovan case, Hrant emphasizes the EU's failure to efficiently use political dialogue as a tool to influence the elites and its attempts to solve this situation through high aid volumes.

The lack of domestic elites' game-changing political will can be also exemplified by the case of Ukraine. Notwithstanding Ukrainian explicit ambition for a stronger integration with the EU, transparent electoral rules, the abolition of the MPs' immunity, and the creation of an independent anti-corruption court are still the demands of street protests, rather than the genuine targets of political reform.¹⁹ While the EU repeatedly underlined the need for an independent anti-corruption court in Ukraine, similar to the case of Moldova, it failed to even rhetorically support the opposition's recent demands for the 'big political reform'.²⁰ Continuing weakness of institutions and respective

deficiencies of the Union's communication represent a crucial factor, shaping the EU's image in the eyes of the neighbourhood's citizens. EU support for corrupt elites and praising the achievements of integration under the terribly lacking rule of law and flourishing corruption are likely to be viewed by the citizens as a manifestation of the Union's hypocrisy.²¹ Thus, it is crucial for the Union to develop a clever legitimacy-friendly way to balance its commitments to values and the neighbourhood's stability, as well as link new ENP incentives to particular country-specific rule of law conditions.

Issue No 4. Geopolitical tensions and conflicts in the neighbourhood

The geopolitical conflict with the Russian Federation over the Eastern Neighbourhood represents a crucial obstacle to the Union's further politicization of the ENP and including a membership perspective thereto. From the perspective of offensive realism, the annexation of Crimea and ongoing aggression in Eastern Ukraine by Russia represent an immediate and foreseeable consequence of the NATO's Eastern enlargement and the ENP.²² Bearing in mind such causality and fearing a new Cold War, the EU tends to opt for sustaining the 'grey zone' status quo for Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia. Moreover, in the era of an increasingly tough EU-Russia geopolitical competition, a continuing security and stability challenge is represented by the protracted conflicts, such as over

¹⁸ K. Hrant, *Why Moldova's European Integration Is Failing*, "CEPS Commentary", 2016 [<https://www.ceps.eu/publications/why-moldova%E2%80%99s-european-integration-failing> access: 20 October 2017]

¹⁹ O. Makarenko, *Kyiv Protests Fizzle out, Demands for Reform Replaced with Calls to Overthrow Poroshenko*, "Euro-aidan Press, News and Views from Ukraine", 24 October 2017 [<http://euromaidanpress.com/2017/10/24/from-demanding-reforms-to-calling-for-poroshenkos-impeachment-the-evolution-of-the-protests-in-kyiv/#arvlbdata> access: 28 October 2017]

²⁰ See, for instance: P. Williams, P. Polituyk, *Corruption Undermining Ukraine's Progress, EU's Juncker Says*, "Reuters", 13 July 2017 [<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-eu-summit/corruption-undermining-ukraines-progress-eus-juncker-says-idUSKBN19Y10A> access: 24 October 2017]

²¹ See fn.18.

²² J. Mearsheimer, *Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault?* "Foreign Affairs", 18 August 2014 [<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault> access: 20 October 2017]

Transnistria in Moldova, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, as well as Luhansk/Donetsk in Eastern Ukraine. Consequently, the 2015 ENP Review marked the policy's securitization and a strengthened emphasis on stability. The question, however, is whether and to which extent such emphasis is compatible with the Union's value promotion. On the one hand, the overall security and the stability of institutions can be viewed as a necessary prerequisite for value-driven reforms. On the other hand, the abovementioned emphases may serve as a temptation to compromise the foundational values for the sake of a revolt-free stability.

The EU's Value Crisis and the External Promotion of Values

Since 2010, scholars increasingly mention the word combination 'overlapping crises' to comprehensively define what is going on in the Union. For the time being, the major issue shaping the (dis)integration dynamics within the EU and generating the intertwined crises is the divide over the immigration and asylum policies between Western Europe, on the one hand, and Central and Eastern Europe, on the other. Importantly, the above divide does not only generate ever-new challenges (e.g., the rise of populist movements, radicalization, etc.), but reveals hidden value-related and economic divides within the Union. Here it is worth arguing that Hungary's and Poland's explicit incomppliance with the rule of law principle in their constitutional law would be hardly imaginable under a politically stronger Union. Similar could be also argued with regard to 'Brexit' and the Catalan struggle for independence. Which spillovers could the above events have for the EU's value promotion? Do new challenges mean new opportunities? And can the EU still be viewed as a legitimate value promoter?

Evidently, the above divides would mean at least three major negative consequences for the ENP in general and its value promotion aspect in particular.

Issue No 1. Increasing Difficulty of Further Politicization of the ENP due to the Lack of Unity among the EU's member states

Since the EU's foreign policy is characterized by a strong intergovernmental component, any internal divide means difficulties in strengthening the policy supranationally in general, as well as advancing the political relations with third countries. Given the rise of nationalists' influence in the EU member states' governments, it is highly doubtful that the EU would be able to supplement the ENP incentives with the membership perspective for the 'associated' neighbours. Similar refers to any other significant new incentives in the framework of political dialogue between the EU and the Eastern neighbours. In turn, the non-introduction of such incentives may lead to a sense of fatigue in the EU-neighbourhood relations and diminish the political legitimacy of the Union, not resolute enough to strengthen incentives even in a long-term perspective. Subsequently, it would become ever harder to genuinely democratize the region under the present elites and pull it out of the present 'grey zone'.

Issue No 2. Sacrificing true transformation for stability

As it is already traceable in the 2015 ENP Review, stabilizing the neighbourhood (inter alia, through countering the far-right and radicalization movements) is the key priority for the modern ENP.²³ Subsequently, similar to the case of many Southern neighbours, the EU may make a strategic choice to sacrifice value promotion

²³ *Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy*, Joint Communication from the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 18 November 2015, JOIN 2015 (50), final.

for the sake of lasting stability. The case of the EU's communication with Moldovan elites, criticized by Hrant, exemplifies the situation, where it was more convenient for the Union to tolerate the disrespect for values and launch ever-new civil society support projects, rather than sacrifice stability.²⁴ Thus, in view of the divide inside the Union and the EU-Russia tensions over Ukraine, stability may overshadow the rule of law, democracy, and human rights as a policy priority in the neighbourhood.



Internal divides within the Union and an endeavour for stability make it hard for the EU to boost its impact on the governments of Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia as regards the promotion of the foundational values

Issue No 3. Conscious Support for 'Cosmetic Reforms' and Ever-Dropping Political Legitimacy

Internal divides within the Union and an endeavour for stability make it hard for the EU to boost its impact on the governments of Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia as regards the promotion of the foundational values. With money as a crucial incentive for change and the professionalization of the civil society, there is a risk of an increasingly 'cosmetic' nature of reforms conducted in Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia with the Union's support. Conscious long-term support for such kind of reforms would inevitably mean the diminishing of the Union's legitimacy as a value promoter in all three Habermasian dimensions of legitimacy. In utilitarian terms, support for reforms with no

transformative power is useless. Moreover, it does not meet the social preferences of the countries' population, striving for the European standards and integration. And, finally, would it be moral for the EU as a 'force for good' to mimic transformation, rather than seek it?

Nevertheless, the analysis would not be full without mentioning the opportunities or the things the Union can actually learn from the experience of countering the 'overlapping crises' to strengthen its value promotion in the Eastern Neighbourhood.

Opportunity 1. Conceptually clear values and new monitoring tools

The rule of law crises in Poland and Hungary resulted in a large-scale rule of law debate in the Union, aimed to develop legal avenues for the EU's safeguarding its values internally.²⁵ One of the achievements of the debate was the launch of the 2014 Rule of Law Framework that introduced the benchmarks of the rule of law as a foundational value of the EU.²⁶ Moreover, the debate produced a lot of ideas regarding assessment and monitoring mechanisms the EU could employ to safeguard the fundamental values. Extrapolating the rule of law debate and its results to the ENP domain would be an opportunity for the EU to produce precise, predictable, and understandable monitoring schemes with regard to the neighbours' observance of the foundational values. In the era of turmoil, emphases on conceptual clarity of values and benchmark-based monitoring mechanisms would be a clear signal from the EU that it would endure challenges and use values as a means to cope with crises, directed to boosting the legitimacy of the EU's action.

²⁴ See fn.18.

²⁵ D. Kochenov, A. Magen, L. Pech, *Introduction: The Great Rule of Law Debate in the EU*, "Journal of Common Market Studies", Vol. 54 (4), 2016, pp. 1045-1049.

²⁶ *A New EU Framework to Strengthen the Rule of Law of 19 March 2014*, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, COM (2014)158, final/2.

Opportunity 2. Value Promotion through Sectoral Functional Cooperation

As proven by the study by Freyburg et al, active functional sectoral cooperation between the EU and the neighbours promotes democratic governance.²⁷ In the situation of the Union's inability to immediately strengthen value promotion under the ENP through reformed political dialogue, an option is to facilitate the functional EU cooperation with the neighbours both bi- and multilaterally. The idea of enhancing value promotion through functional cooperation pierces Commissioner Joseph Hahn's idea to formulate the Eastern Partnership's future in 20 new deliverables to be achieved by 2020.²⁸ In this regard, a particular role shall be attributed to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs) between the EU and the neighbours in view of innovative market access conditionality, present in these agreements.²⁹ Business development, energy, and contacts between people represent necessary aspects of the EU's cooperation with Eastern neighbours that need to be further emphasized to advance the utility of the ENP as a whole and meet respective social preferences.

Opportunity 3. Linking Conflict Resolution, Stabilization, and the Rule of Law Promotion

Sacrificing values for the sake of stability and omitting painful democracy and rule of law-related issues in political communication is one of the worst things the EU can do, if it wishes to remain a credible international value promoter and a 'force for good'. Therefore, it is

crucial for the Union to develop clear linkages between conflict resolution, stability, and the rule of law as the objectives of the ENP, so that the quest for stability does not harm the foundational values. The development of such linkages shall be based upon the previous critical reconsideration of its political communication with the neighbours over the above issues and consultations with domestic experts and civil society.

Opportunity 4. Stronger citizen involvement

As a large supranational political creature, the EU has been always blamed for a 'democratic deficit', lacking legitimacy, and being too distant from citizens.³⁰ Subsequently, it is crucial for the EU to facilitate the neighbourhood's citizens' involvement in the functional cooperation programmes. In this regard, special attention needs to be attributed to involving individuals, previously not targeted by the EU programmes, such as the rural population, mid-career professionals, and pensioners, as well as supporting grassroots movements along with professionalized SCOs. Stronger citizen involvement will help the Union match its support to social preferences and make a better use of funds.

Conclusion

Foundational values play a crucial role in the EU's foreign policy, shaping its international identity and power, as well as serving as objectives for the EU-neighbourhood relations and benchmarks for the EU's conditionality policy. Despite having reached a range of its objectives (e.g., the conclusion

²⁷ T. Freyburg, S. Lavenex, F. Schimmelfennig, T. Skripka, A. Wetzel, A. (eds.), *Democracy Promotion by Functional Cooperation: The European Union and Its Neighbourhood*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015.

²⁸ A. Piculicka-Wilczewska, *Eastern Partnership: 20 Deliverables for 2020*, "New Eastern Europe", 17 October 2017 [<http://neweasterneurope.eu/2017/10/17/eastern-partnership-20-deliverables-2020/> access: 20 October 2017]

²⁹ For the comprehensive analysis of the different types of conditionality in the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, see: R. Petrov, G. Van der Loo, P. Van Elsuwege, *The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement: A New Legal Instrument of Integration without Membership? 2015* [kmlpj.ukma.edu.ua/article/download/52678/48729 access: 20 October 2017]

³⁰ See, for instance: A. Moravcsik, *Is There a 'Democratic Deficit' in World Politics? A Framework for Analysis*, "International Journal of Comparative Politics", Vol. 39(2), 2004, pp. 336-363.

of the Association Agreements, visa-free travel for the 'associated' neighbours), the policy faces crucial challenges. They include the lack of membership perspective as an incentive for transformation, undefined substance of values as the transformation-related benchmarks, self-serving elites and weak institutions in the neighbourhood, as well as Russian opposition to the Europeanization of the Eastern neighbours and its support for conflicts therein. The 'overlapping crises' in the EU, manifesting themselves inter alia in the divides over the immigration and asylum policies, as well as the rise of populist, separatist, and Eurosceptic movements, create further threats for the value promotion under the ENP and its legitimacy. The most important ones include shrinking opportunities for further politicization of the ENP, sacrificing transformation for the sake of stability, and

a conscious support for 'cosmetic reforms'. Nevertheless, there are still opportunities for the EU to save the ENP and remain a legitimate value promoter, such as the introduction of conceptually clear values and respective monitoring mechanisms, putting a new focus on value promotion through functional cooperation, linking conflict resolution and stabilization to the rule of law promotion, as well as a stronger citizen involvement in the ENP initiatives.

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