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The role of diplomatic services in shaping international image: Ukrainian diplomacy before and after 24 February 2022

Abstract. The study examined the role of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, economic cooperation, and digital tools as critical components in shaping a country's international image on a global scale. The aim was to analyse how these instruments influenced global perceptions of Ukraine and the outcomes they generated for the country amidst war. The research employed methods of analysing international communication, public diplomacy, and Ukraine's economic and cultural activities following the invasion. Particular emphasis was placed on the impact of these initiatives on international support for Ukraine and its relations with global partners. Furthermore, the study highlighted public diplomacy as a pivotal mechanism in Ukraine's efforts to secure international backing and counter Russian propaganda. Since the onset of the war, public diplomacy efforts, including cultural initiatives and the national branding campaign "Ukraine Now", have gained significant momentum, facilitating the dissemination of accurate information about the situation in Ukraine worldwide. Economic diplomacy has also been effectively utilised to secure foreign investments and humanitarian aid, while digital diplomacy has enabled swift communication with the global community, particularly through social media platforms. Cultural projects have served as vital avenues for promoting Ukrainian artists and raising awareness of national culture during the war. Moreover, Ukrainian cultural diplomacy has not only promoted the nation's cultural values but has also highlighted its struggle for freedom and independence. The findings of this study can be employed by governmental bodies, diplomatic institutions, cultural organisations, and civil society to develop effective strategies for international communication, advancing national interests, and garnering international support in times of conflict and crisis.

Keywords: political efforts; humanitarian aid; full-scale invasion; integration; soft power; state identity; cultural ties

Introduction

Diplomatic services have been instrumental in shaping a nation's international image and facilitating communication between governments and the global community. As the 21st century's information landscape continues to expand and competition for influence on the international stage intensifies, the nature of diplomacy is evolving. This evolution has been particularly evident in Ukrainian diplomacy, which has undergone significant transformations since Russia's invasion on 24 February 2022. This marked a turning point for Ukrainian diplomats, who have had to adapt their strategies and methods, prioritising the

dissemination of accurate information about the conflict and building a positive image of Ukraine.

The profound changes in the geopolitical landscape following Russia's aggression against Ukraine provided the impetus for this research. These events have not only triggered a severe humanitarian and military crisis but have also had far-reaching consequences for Ukraine itself. A key question is how to effectively develop and maintain a positive international reputation in the face of military aggression and global instability. In his study, N. Adler (2022) examined the role of Ukraine's President

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Volodymyr Zelenskyi as a leader of a new era, focusing on his activities on social media. The author demonstrated how the use of digital media became a key tool for V. Zelenskyi during the war, enabling him to communicate effectively with an international audience. N. Matiaszczyk (2024) conducted research on urban diplomacy as an institution of multilevel solidarity and support for Ukraine following Russia's 2022 invasion. The author explored changes in urban diplomacy arising from the conflict and highlighted their significance in strengthening international ties at the city level. V. Axyonova & K. Lozka (2024) proposed a novel approach to studying diplomacy by focusing on non-state actors, specifically think tanks. Their research underscored the role of Ukrainian experts in international diplomacy during the war, offering valuable insights into emerging forms of global interaction.

Y.A. Stivachtis (2023) investigated the impact of digital technologies on the diplomacy of major powers in the contemporary era. The study focused on how advances in communication and digital platforms have transformed traditional approaches to diplomatic practices, particularly in interstate relations. The author analysed how major powers are adapting to the new realities of digital diplomacy, including the use of social media and digital tools to influence the global community and promote their national interests.

N. Chaban & O. Elgström (2023) examined the transformation of EU public diplomacy under the influence of the war in Ukraine. They highlighted both the challenges and new opportunities for the EU in promoting its values and interests. The authors made a significant contribution to confirming the importance of public diplomacy in conflict situations. E. Vlaeminck (2021) investigated how European states used digital diplomacy in their relations with Russia, particularly through social media. The author emphasised the importance of digital platforms for communication between states and the public, especially in an environment of increasing international tensions. E. Brighi & S. Giusti (2023) analysed the reaction of Italian society and the highest leadership to the Ukrainian crisis, highlighting the difficulties and costs associated with maintaining a consistent policy in times of war. Their analysis demonstrates the challenges of balancing on the international stage faced by Ukrainian diplomats while preserving traditional approaches. R. Benedikter (2023) analysed the global consequences of the war and argued that it is contributing to the formation of two different models of globalisation. This is an important study that opens up new discussions about the future course of politics and the functioning of the economy.

The current study aimed to analyse the transformation of Ukrainian diplomacy in shaping the country's international image amidst the changes triggered by 24 February 2022. The research focused on examining new strategies and approaches adopted by diplomatic services to ensure positive perceptions of Ukraine on the global stage and evaluating the impact of global political shifts on their activities.

Literature Review

The topic of Ukrainian diplomacy and Ukraine's image remains highly relevant in 2024. This issue is of the utmost

importance to Ukrainian society. Currently, Ukrainian scholars are actively exploring various aspects of the nation's diplomacy during the war, including the functioning of its diplomatic service and Ukraine's image in the eyes of the global community. On the other hand, research into the role of diplomatic services in shaping Ukraine's image is almost non-existent. Among Ukrainian researchers, S. Vidnyanskyj (2023) stands out; the author conducted a study of the role of Ukrainian diplomacy in the context of the war with Russia, particularly through the prism of interaction with the UN. The author highlighted how Ukrainian diplomats used the UN platform to emphasise their struggle for independence and territorial integrity. The author points to successful campaigns aimed at building international support and condemning Russian aggression.

A significant aspect was that, following the outbreak of war, the role of diplomacy became more multifaceted and informationally transparent, which correlates with the research of H. Dylan & T.J. Maguire (2022). The researchers analysed the role of secret intelligence in the context of public diplomacy during the war in Ukraine. The authors emphasise that information warfare has become an important element of modern conflicts, and classified data has been used to support the formation of a positive international image for Ukraine. They indicate the need to integrate intelligence data into diplomatic strategies, which has helped Ukraine create a narrative of Russian aggression and mobilise the support of the international community. However, despite the in-depth analysis, the article does not take into account aspects related to the long-term consequences of such actions for Ukraine's reputation. The question of ethics and transparency in intelligence activities also remains open, as the balance between security and openness is extremely important in modern diplomacy.

I. Manor (2023) examined the concept of digital public diplomacy, which is particularly relevant in the face of contemporary global challenges, including the war in Ukraine. The author underscores the significance of digital platforms as tools for shaping a nation's international image and garnering international support. Manor argues that the effective use of social media and other digital media can significantly bolster a country's position on the global stage, as evidenced by Ukrainian diplomacy during the conflict with Russia. However, the research falls short in a comprehensive analysis of the risks associated with disinformation and manipulation in the digital environment, which can undermine public diplomacy efforts. These gaps highlight the need for a deeper exploration of the effectiveness of digital strategies in various contexts to understand how best to integrate them with other diplomatic methods.

S. Ventura (2024) analysed the visual narrative of Ukraine's official Instagram account, Ukraine.Ua, and its role in digital public diplomacy during the war. The author examines how the visual materials presented on the platform shape the perception of the war in Ukraine, foster international support, and strengthen national identity. The author argues that through the strategic use of images, state diplomacy successfully conveys its message, emphasising the resilience of the Ukrainian people and humanitarian needs. However, the research has some gaps. It does not consider how different audiences react to visual content, which can impact the effectiveness of communication

strategies. Additionally, there is a lack of comparative analysis with other countries that also use social media for public diplomacy.

H. Maurer *et al.* (2023) examine the European Union's response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, highlighting the collective responsibility of European countries to ensure regional stability. The authors argue that EU unity has been critical in confronting security threats and supporting Ukraine during this challenging period. They also note that the Common Security and Defence Policy needs to be enhanced to ensure a more effective response to crises. The research does, however, have certain limitations. For instance, it did not delve deeply into the issue of divergent positions among individual EU member states regarding military aid to Ukraine, which could impact the overall effectiveness of collective action. Additionally, there was a lack of analysis of the socioeconomic consequences for EU countries affected by the escalation of the conflict, which could have provided important context for considering collective responsibility. These gaps point to the need for further research into the EU's common policy on external challenges and their impact on internal stability.

S.T. Lee (2023) investigated how Ukraine's external diplomacy has shaped the country's perception amid the war with Russia. S.T. Lee (2023) emphasises that Ukrainian diplomatic services have become key players in forming a positive international image for Ukraine, particularly in the context of disseminating information about war crimes and the humanitarian crisis. Focusing on a series of successful communication campaigns, the author analyses their impact on the global perception of Ukraine as a victim of aggression rather than an aggressor. The study also highlights the role of social media and modern communication strategies, which have become important tools for Ukrainian diplomats. This has enabled Ukraine to shape narratives that have helped to strengthen international support, including sanctions against Russia and military aid. While noting the successes of Ukrainian diplomacy, Lee points out that changing a country's image is a longterm process that requires constant effort and adaptation to the changing conditions of the international environment. Based on this research, it can be argued that Ukrainian diplomacy is not only reacting to challenges but also actively shaping international policy through strategic communications, making it a crucial element in the process of European integration and post-war reconstruction. This underscores the need for further research into the effectiveness of diplomatic strategies in various contexts, for a deeper understanding of the role of diplomacy in international relations.

Materials and Methods

To conduct this research, a variety of materials were analysed that reflect the current state of Ukraine's diplomatic activities and its impact on the country's international image – both before and after 24 February 2022. Sources used in this research included international agreements, national legislation, reports of international organisations, official speeches, statistical data, and decisions adopted at international conferences. The primary source for this research was international treaties, specifically

the Agreement on Security Cooperation between Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (2024). This agreement underscored the strategic partnership between the two states regarding Ukraine's security, thereby strengthening Ukraine's international standing amid the ongoing conflict with Russia. Another important document analysed was the Agreement on Security Cooperation and Long-Term Support between Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Germany (2024), which outlines the expansion of military and economic aid from Germany – a crucial factor in stabilising the situation in Ukraine following the onset of large-scale aggression.

In addition to international agreements, reports from various international organisations were used to gather crucial information regarding the humanitarian situation in Ukraine and the global community's response. For instance, the report "Crisis in Ukraine 2022: 6 months of humanitarian response" (2022) provided valuable insights into the support offered by the international community in the early stages of the invasion, which helped shape the global image of Ukraine as a country in urgent need of humanitarian aid.

Furthermore, official speeches, including the Speech by Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the Ukraine Recovery Conference (2024), were analysed. His speeches served as important sources of information regarding Ukraine's strategic goals for infrastructure reconstruction, economic development, and securing international assistance, thus shaping the global perception of the country. Additionally, legislative acts of international partners were examined, such as Public Law of USA No. 118-50 (2024). This document aimed to provide Ukraine with additional financial support, underlining the significance of the Ukrainian issue in international politics and its role in shaping Ukraine's positive image as a nation committed to defending its independence and democratic principles.

Results and Discussion

In an era of information transparency, a state that fails to ensure open communication and does not prioritise adherence to fundamental human rights and freedoms, freedom of political choice, and freedom of expression in the media, cannot achieve a positive image as a democratic state in the international community. A country's perception by the international community determines its place in the system of international relations, its ability to address competitive challenges, its attractiveness to investment, economic development, and the expansion of opportunities for partnership, cooperation, and tourism. Moreover, a diplomatic image plays a significant role in shaping the domestic political landscape; for instance, opposition parties may use a negative national image to criticise government policies. A state's international image serves as a measure of its political and economic significance, prosperity, and cultural progress, reflecting the authority and success of its actions on the world stage. A positive state image correlates with how it is perceived by other countries and its own citizens.

A state's image is composed of a set of interrelated objective characteristics of the state system – economic, geographic, national, and demographic factors. When a country's economy is linked to the global market,

international capital, and cultural development, its image becomes the foundation of economic success (Lee, 2023).

A state's international image significantly shapes its reputation in the eyes of the public and the international community based on the actions or inaction of various actors interacting with the outside world. Favourable perceptions of a state, both domestically and internationally, are crucial for the success of global political, social, and economic movements aimed at reform (Manor & Huang, 2022). Achieving such perception requires not only the implementation of practical economic reforms but also the optimisation of government structures and management.

Before 24 February 2022, Ukraine's image was shaped by a combination of historical, political, and social factors that influenced its standing on the international stage. Since 1991, Ukraine has faced numerous challenges, including economic crises, political instability, corruption, and conflicts with neighbouring states, particularly Russia. These issues contributed to an ambivalent perception of Ukraine in the global community (Manor, 2023).

Before 2022, Ukraine's international image was often associated with political and economic instability. The country experienced several significant political crises, accompanied by changes in government and protests. The Orange Revolution of 2004 and the Euromaidan of 2014 were landmark events that drew global attention but also contributed to stereotypes about Ukrainian politics as being incapable of sustainable development (Maurer *et al.*, 2023). Critics often pointed out that Ukrainian politicians failed to overcome corruption, which undermined trust in the country among international partners. Additionally, Russia, through its policies, discredited Ukraine's image. Factors that significantly influenced the perception of Ukraine abroad were Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the separatist movements in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Since 2015, Ukraine has been associated with armed conflicts and humanitarian crises, leading to increased negative attitudes among parts of the international community (Crisis in Ukraine 2022..., 2022). Such a situation made it difficult to attract foreign investment and support, as potential partners, neighbours, and G8 countries (United Kingdom, Germany, France, Poland) viewed Ukraine as an unstable and risky country for business (Maurer *et al.*, 2023).

A crucial aspect that also influenced Ukraine's image was its economic performance. The country possessed agricultural potential and significant natural resources, but economic problems, high inflation, unemployment, and corruption significantly reduced Ukraine's attractiveness to foreign investors. As a result, economic indicators were often assessed negatively, reflecting the overall image of the country as a problematic territory. In the eyes of European leaders who shape public opinion, Ukraine was seen as an agrarian country, although Ukraine can compete with developed European countries in terms of mineral resources, the reserves of which have been largely depleted due to constant extraction. Despite these challenges, Ukraine sought to strengthen its international image through integration into European structures. A significant step was the association between the EU and Ukraine in 2014. The Agreement on Security Cooperation

between Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (2024) confirmed Ukraine's intentions regarding European integration and the implementation of reforms in various areas. However, the implementation of these reforms often faced resistance, leading to additional difficulties in forming a positive image (Vlaeminck, 2021).

Culture also played a significant role in shaping Ukraine's image. For many years, the country has attempted to showcase its culture on the international stage through various cultural programs, festivals, exhibitions, and participation in international competitions. However, news from Ukraine was often perceived through the lens of the conflict with Russia, while positive achievements, such as cultural or scientific advancements, remained overlooked. This led to a stereotypical perception of Ukraine as a country constantly experiencing difficulties and crises, overshadowing its potential and opportunities and equating Ukraine with third-world countries.

Following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the global community witnessed a radical transformation of Ukraine's image. This event not only marked a turning point in the country's military history but also changed its international image, political ties, and cultural reputation. In a very short period of time, Ukraine became a symbol of the fight for freedom, dignity, and human rights, significantly altering its perception in the eyes of the international community (Ventura, 2024).

One of the most significant and obvious changes in Ukraine's image after the start of the war was the increase in international support. Following the invasion, various countries demonstrated solidarity with Ukraine through different forms of assistance (Public Law of USA No. 11850, 2024). For example, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and European Union member states not only condemned the aggression but also began supplying military equipment, weapons, and humanitarian aid (Stivachtis, 2023).

During his presidency, V. Zelenskyi has participated in numerous international summits and forums, including the Normandy Format, the UN General Assembly, and NATO meetings. He has consistently worked to strengthen relations with partner countries, the European Union, the United States, and Canada. His initiatives have focused not only on securing assistance but also on collaborating on projects and initiatives (Adler, 2022; Speech by Volodymyr Zelenskyy..., 2024). The President has used every opportunity to engage with world leaders and advocate for Ukraine's interests on the international stage, leading to the signing of the Agreement on Security Cooperation and Long-Term Support between Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Germany (2024).

In recognition of his efforts, the prestigious American magazine *Time* named Volodymyr Zelenskyy "Person of the Year 2022", highlighting how his actions have fostered greater understanding, facilitated discussions on shared issues, and strengthened bilateral relations with international partners. As a result, he has developed friendly relations with many world leaders, including the presidents of the United States, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Poland, and others. Since the invasion, there has also been an increase in international visits to Ukraine,

where world leaders have been invited. To express their support and solidarity, Kyiv has been visited by leaders of many countries, including Joe Biden, Emmanuel Macron, and Olaf Scholz. These visits have been important signals to the global community, demonstrating that Ukraine is not isolated in its struggle and has strong allies.

One of the key changes has been how international media outlets have begun to cover events in Ukraine. Previously, news about Ukraine was limited to negative stories about corruption, political crises, and economic difficulties. However, after the war began, the world's media started paying attention to the resistance of the smaller and less equipped Ukrainian army against the more powerful and numerous Russian forces, and its willingness to fight for freedom and dignity. Examples of such representations can be found in many major publications, such as *The New York Times*, *BBC*, and *The Guardian*. They highlighted not only military actions but also human stories that demonstrated the strength of spirit and unity of the people (Benedikter, 2023).

Ukraine is leveraging new technologies to promote its image. Social media has become a vital tool in shaping public opinion about Ukraine. In particular, Ukrainian users create content that showcases the realities of life during the war, presenting stories of ordinary people who continue to live. This content gains significant popularity and resonates with international audiences, contributing to the formation of a positive image of Ukraine. The international community has also played a crucial role in changing Ukraine's image by actively collaborating with the Ukrainian government. The UN, the European Union, and other international organisations have increased their presence in Ukraine, providing humanitarian and technical assistance. On the other hand, the international community's perception of several indicators related to tourism, and the willingness to invest in Ukraine, has decreased (Manor & Huang 2022).

Before the war, Ukraine had a stable image in external markets as a supplier of metallurgical and metal products, and less processed agricultural products, as a provider of quality IT services, and as a strong player in the global free digital market. Over the years of the war, Ukraine has made significant progress in digital readiness rankings. From 64th place in pre-war 2021 to 50th place at the end of 2022 (a rise of 14 positions). This indicates the steps Ukraine has taken to increase the level of digital technology implementation (Nation Brands Index 2023..., 2023).

However, despite these positive changes, Ukraine continues to face significant reputational challenges. Disinformation and propaganda from Russia remain serious threats. The aggressor country actively spreads false information about Ukraine. In particular, information campaigns that highlight alleged weakness or corruption in Ukraine can influence the perception of the country in some regions of the world (Blake, 2022).

As international communication is the interaction and exchange of information between different cultures, groups of states, and nations, it plays a crucial role in shaping and maintaining the image of states on the world stage. This has become particularly relevant for Ukraine since the beginning of Russia's aggression on 24th February 2022. Since then, Ukrainian diplomacy has actively

used all possible channels of international communication to convey to the world truthful information about the war, Russia's crimes, and Ukraine's efforts to protect its independence and territorial integrity (Kan, 2024).

International communication provides the global community with unbiased and reliable information about the positions of states on the most important international issues, their foreign policy initiatives and actions, and the results of their activities in the fields of economics, trade, culture, and science. In the case of Ukraine, the formation of a positive international image was particularly important when the country found itself in the spotlight of the world community in the context of resisting aggression. Ukrainian diplomats have delivered clear messages about democratic values, the desire for European integration, and the protection of international law.

After 24th February 2022, Ukrainian diplomats intensified their activities in this area, drawing attention to the humanitarian crisis, war crimes, and refugee issues, which helped Ukraine gain support from international organisations and humanitarian aid from partner countries (Matiaszczyk, 2024). The main goals of public diplomacy include enhancing the country's image, fostering a positive international communication environment, establishing mutual relationships with partners, and promoting political and cultural values. Moreover, it plays a crucial role in disseminating information about events in Ukraine, particularly in the context of war, which is essential for gaining international support (Al-Kassimi, 2023).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine has outlined six key areas of public diplomacy in its 2021-2025 strategy: economic, cultural, expert, scientific-educational, professional, and digital diplomacy. The current emphasis on economic diplomacy is a response to economic globalisation, increased global challenges, the growth of transnational corporations, and intensified competition in the international market. In the context of the ongoing war, economic diplomacy also serves as a means of supporting Ukraine, particularly through attracting international investment and facilitating economic assistance (Axyonova & Lozka, 2023).

The role of economic diplomacy lies in creating favourable conditions for a country's integration into the global economy. Tools such as negotiations, informal agreements, participation in international economic organisations, implementation of joint economic programs, and contacts with representatives of government, business, and the public are used to achieve this (Wright, 2023). After 24th February 2022, Ukrainian diplomats worked to strengthen economic cooperation with international partners, attract humanitarian aid, and secure financial resources for post-war reconstruction (Brighi & Giusti, 2023).

One of the primary objectives of economic diplomacy in the context of shaping a state's image is to maintain Ukraine's investment image in the international arena by providing information about investment opportunities, consulting on doing business in Ukraine, and facilitating communication between investors and the government. This direction became critically important after the start of the war, as the country's economic stability depended on attracting international support and investment. The

Office for Investment Promotion and Support, Ukraine Invest, established in October 2016 under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, has been actively working to inform international investors about the opportunities and challenges of doing business in Ukraine during the war (Chaban & Elgström, 2023).

The National Tourism Development Agency is responsible for promoting Ukraine's tourism potential. Its main activities include participation in international tourism exhibitions (seven exhibitions in 2023), signing cooperation agreements with foreign tourism centres and global booking platforms, and participating in meetings of the European Commission of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation. Programs to popularise Ukraine's tourism opportunities during the war have taken on new forms, with an emphasis on cultural tourism and unique historical sites that continue to operate even during military actions (Dylan & Maguire, 2022).

One of the key directions of public diplomacy is cultural diplomacy. Ukrainian cultural diplomacy after 24th February 2022, has become not only a tool for popularising national culture but also a means of international support for Ukraine's fight for freedom. Cultural projects have become important channels for disseminating information about the war and supporting Ukrainian artists who have suffered due to the war (Hadfield & Whitman, 2023). For example, the project "Culture Fights Back", launched in 2023, told the stories of artists who joined the Ukrainian army (Manor, 2023).

The Ukrainian Cultural Foundation (UCF) has also played a significant role in promoting Ukrainian culture abroad. The UCF has supported numerous cultural initiatives that have become important elements of international support for Ukraine, including cooperation with international cultural organisations to promote Ukrainian music, literature, theatre, and cinema at international festivals and exhibitions (Popovski & Malhotra, 2023). Scientific and educational diplomacy is an integral part of public diplomacy, aimed at building friendly relations with other regions through scientific and educational exchanges. This direction has also been actively developing after the start of the war, particularly through programs for Ukrainian students and scientists abroad, which has contributed to Ukraine's integration into the global scientific community (Szulecki & Overland, 2023). Digital diplomacy has taken on particular importance since the beginning of Russia's fullscale invasion when social media became the primary tool for the rapid transmission of information about events in Ukraine (Welslau & Selck, 2024). The information portal war.ukraine.ua plays a crucial role, providing up-to-date information about the war and Ukraine's struggle for independence (Seheda & Smolianiuk, 2020; Vidnyanskyi, 2023).

Therefore, the research conducted has shown that Ukrainian diplomacy, adapting to new conditions, has managed to build a strong international image, relying on modern diplomatic tools and global support. This transformation has allowed Ukraine not only to maintain the political and military support of world states but also to build a new, modern diplomatic model that meets the challenges of the global crisis. Further research can focus on the effectiveness of this model in the long term,

especially in the context of post-war reconstruction and Ukraine's integration into global structures.

Conclusions

The primary aim of this research into the role of diplomatic services was to assess how Ukrainian diplomacy adapted to emerging challenges and the measures it took to enhance the country's international standing. The findings revealed that Ukrainian diplomacy demonstrated flexibility and the ability to respond rapidly to the evolving situation. Factors contributing to its success included the active use of social media to disseminate information about the conflict. Diplomats worked diligently to strengthen ties with international organisations, particularly the UN, NATO, and the EU, which contributed to the formation of a positive image of Ukraine on the global stage. These efforts were effective, leading to a significant increase in humanitarian and military aid from the international community.

Ukrainian diplomacy has shown the ability to adapt promptly to the dynamic conditions of the international environment. The use of crisis communication enabled government services to maintain constant contact with a global audience, explaining the context of events in Ukraine and emphasising the importance of international support. Public diplomacy has become a key element in shaping a positive international image of Ukraine. Information campaigns, regular briefings, the participation of diplomats in international events, and appearances on key media platforms have contributed to increasing awareness of the situation in the country, fostering support among governments and the public abroad.

Social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) have become the primary tool of digital diplomacy. This channel was used to disseminate accurate information, debunk fake news, and actively engage a global audience in dialogue. Such a strategy contributed to the formation of a positive narrative about Ukraine in the international information space. National branding campaigns, such as "Ukraine Now", combined with cultural diplomacy focused on promoting national identity through art, music, and literature, created a foundation for the long-term formation of a positive image of the country as a democratic, open, and progressive state. As a result of the improved international image, the number of countries providing military assistance increased significantly, and the volume of humanitarian initiatives carried out in partnership with international organisations grew substantially. These achievements underscore the effectiveness of Ukrainian diplomacy in times of crisis.

Based on the obtained results, future research can focus on several areas. The influence of the Ukrainian diaspora on shaping the country's international image and its impact on diplomatic initiatives should be explored, as the Ukrainian community abroad can become a vital asset in promoting a positive image.

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None.

Conflict of Interest

None.

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