

POLAND'S AND HUNGARY'S SOFT IMPACTS ON UKRAINE: COMMON AND DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

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Summary

The article considers soft influences' characteristics of Poland and Hungary on Ukraine. Similar soft power's features of Poland and Hungary on Ukraine are: 1) goals (forming a positive image of states, spreading of their own (as well as common European) values, supporting foreign Poles and Hungarians, attracting Ukrainians to work and study); 2) institutions (government structures, diplomatic institutions, state and non-state foundations, public organizations, educational institutions, mass media); 3) directions (educational, cultural, economic, informational); 4) conditions (soft power of Poland and Hungary has a favorable ground, because Ukraine has chosen a pro-Western foreign policy course). Distinguishing characteristics of both countries' soft influence on Ukraine are: 1) the Hungary's soft power, unlike the Polish one, has rather limited geographical boundaries in Ukraine (the territory of Transcarpathia) and is closely related to the support of the Hungarian national minority; 2) the main feature of the educational direction of the Hungary's soft influence is that higher education, like school education, can be obtained in Ukraine's educational institutions in the Hungarian language; 3) soft power of Hungary is accompanied by mass passporting of the Transcarpathia's population, which can carry potentially serious political, demographic, socio-economic and other threats; 4) the Budapest's information influence, which can be called a sharp power, is often associated with criticism of Ukraine and even anti-Ukrainian propaganda.

Key words: soft power, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, sharp power, comparative analysis.

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1. Introduction

Soft power, based on attractiveness and voluntary participation, is an effective means for many states to achieve foreign policy goals. A country that implements its own soft power policy is at the same time an object of soft power influence of other states. Ukraine, which is actively influenced by neighboring countries, is no exception. Among them are Poland and Hungary, which, according to data from the Portland agency, were among the top thirty countries in the global soft power rating (2016–2019) (*The Soft Power 30*). The leading consulting company Brand Finance placed Poland and Hungary in 33 and 48 places among the top 121 nations in the global soft power index (*Global Soft Power Index 2023*). Finding common and distinguishing characteristics of the two states' soft power in Ukraine allows for better understanding the soft influence of each country, its features, means and goals, and on the basis of this to develop separate strategies for Ukraine's relations with these countries.

Certain aspects of this topic were studied mainly by Ukrainian and Polish scientists: M. Protsiuk (*Protsiuk, 2017*), Yu. Mateleshko (*Mateleshko, 2018; Mateleshko, 2019; Mateleshko, 2021*), Ye. Ryabinin (*Ryabinin, 2018*), D. Kononenko (*Kononenko, 2018*), A. Woroniecka (*Woroniecka, 2011; Woroniecka, 2013*), O. Bogorodetska (*Bogorodetska, 2018*), etc.

Based on the scientists' achievements, as well as primary sources (legislative acts, statistical reports, global ratings, etc.), we will try find out the soft influences' common and distinguishing characteristics of Poland and Hungary on Ukraine (before the start of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war).

2. Conditions, goals and institutions of soft impact

Since soft power is based on attractiveness (of culture, political values, foreign policy), the established image of the developed West provided significant opportunities for a successful soft power policy. Moreover, due to the pro-Western foreign policy course of Ukraine, which it chose after 1991, Western soft impact had a more favorable ground for penetrating Ukrainian society. Therefore, Poland and Hungary, which quite successfully carried out democratic transformations, built liberal market economies and relatively quickly integrated into NATO and the EU, became quite attractive countries for Ukrainians.

There are both countries' several common goals of soft influence on Ukraine: 1) formation of a positive images of Poland and Hungary among the Ukrainian population; 2) spreading of their own (as well as Western in general) political and cultural values; 3) involvement of the Ukrainian population in in studying and working abroad, which is related to demographic problems in the recipient countries; 4) support for Hungarians and Poles living on the Ukraine's territory.

Hungary's and Poland's soft impacts is related to the support of representatives of their nations living in Ukraine, but the degree of this support and approaches to its implementation are somewhat different. Hungary is the most active in this matter, for which the development of the foreign Hungarians' national identity is one of the state policy's main tasks, which is enshrined in the country's Constitution (*Magyarország Alaptörvénye, 2011*). Therefore, the Hungarian soft power in Ukraine has a fairly clear geographical framework, which is mostly limited to the territory of Transcarpathia, where the Hungarian national minority lives compactly (about 150,000 people according to the last population census). The strategic goal of Budapest is to give dual citizenship and autonomy to the Transcarpathian Hungarians, which was repeatedly stated by the country's top officials (Prime Minister V. Orban, Vice Prime Minister J. Shemien, etc.) (*Mateleshko, 2021: 57*). The influence of Poland's soft power is not limited to the places of compact residence of the Polish national minority (about 100,000 people mostly in the western regions), but has much wider territorial boundaries. This is due to the fact that the Polish minority is fragmented, not numerous and insufficiently consolidated. For Budapest, as well as for Warsaw, representatives of the Ukrainian ethnic group are also the object of soft impact, but it is mainly concentrated on the Transcarpathian region's territory.

The soft impact policy of both countries has a solid institutional basis. A wide network of state institutions has been created in Poland. The main role among them plays the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which includes the Department of Public and Cultural Diplomacy), as well as the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, etc. In order to coordinate the activities of various ministries, the Polish Promotion Council was established in 2004. This Council send its recommendations to the government. In addition, under the auspices of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, several dozen Polish Institutes (one of them is in Kyiv) and cultural attaches in diplomatic missions operate abroad. (*Mateleshko, 2019: 90*). One of the main Hungary's institutions involved in the implementation of the soft influence policy is the Ministry of Foreign Economy and Foreign Affairs. It includes the Department of Cultural and Scientific Diplomacy and the Balassi Institute (not present in Ukraine), which promotes Hungarian culture and language abroad. There is

also a system of state bodies involved in supporting the Hungarian minority abroad: the Forum of Hungarian Representatives of the Carpathian Region under the Parliament, the Parliamentary Commission on National Unity, the Hungarian Permanent Assembly under the Government, the Interdepartmental Commission on National Policy, etc. (*Mateleshko, 2021: 57–58*).

In addition to the above-mentioned bodies, the subjects of soft influences of Poland and Hungary are: 1) state and non-state foundations (the Foundation of the Spiritual Culture of Borderlands in Lublin, the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, the Friends of Hungary Foundation, the Bethlen Gabor Foundation, the Egan Ede Transcarpathian Economic Development Center, etc.); 2) diplomatic institutions (embassies, consulates); 3) public organizations of national minorities (the Federation of Polish Organizations in Ukraine, the Union of Poles in Ukraine, the Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association, the Democratic Union of Hungarians of Ukraine, etc.); 4) educational institutions (both operating in Ukraine and abroad); 5) mass media (print media, internet media, TV and radio programs).

3. The main areas of Poland's and Hungary's soft impacts

The main areas of both states' soft power are: educational, cultural, economic and informational.

The sphere of education has a special place among the means of soft power, since the sponsoring state can effectively use the intellectual resources of foreign countries in its own interests. Until 2014, neither Poland nor Hungary were leaders in terms of the number of Ukrainian students studying abroad (in this they were far behind Russia). But already in 2019, according to UNESCO, most Ukrainian students abroad studied in Poland (26.9 thousand) (*Mihratsiia v Ukraini: tsyfry i fakty, 2021*). At the same time, about 1.2 thousand predominantly Hungarian-speaking citizens of Ukraine studied in Hungary (*Ukrainian Students in Hungary..., 2018*). Poland's leadership in the educational services market is explained by a simple procedure for entering universities, linguistic and cultural closeness, quality and cost of education, as well as the prospect of finding a good job. This is also facilitated by the marketing campaigns of Polish universities to attract students from abroad, as well as the unstable socio-economic and military-political situation in Ukraine. Grant and scholarship programs initiated by the Polish government also attract Ukrainians. According to an online survey of over 1,000 Ukrainians conducted in 2018, only 6% of Ukrainians who studied in Poland intended to return to Ukraine after completing their studies (*Mihratsiia v Ukraini: tsyfry i fakty, 2019: 9*).

The soft influence of Budapest is enhanced by the fact that higher education in Hungarian can be obtained in Ukraine, in particular at the Ferenc Rakoczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education in Beregovo, funded by the government of a neighboring state, and at the Ukrainian-Hungarian Educational and Scientific Institute of Uzhhorod National University.

The soft power of neighboring states is also being strengthened by general educational institutions. In the 2020–2021 academic year, there were 73 (of which 6 are private) schools in Ukraine where children studied only in the Hungarian language (Transcarpathia region). In addition, there are 27 institutions of general secondary education with classes in Ukrainian and Hungarian in the Transcarpathian region. At the same time, there are only a few schools in Ukraine with the Polish language of studying: 4 – with Polish (Lviv region) and 2 – with Ukrainian and Polish (Khmelnysky region) (*MON pidrakhvalo..., 2021*). However, the Polish language can be studied in various institutions of Ukraine (lyceums, schools, gymnasiums, Polish Houses, etc.). There is also an extensive network of Hungarian language courses organized by the aforementioned Transcarpathian Hungarian College in Transcarpathia.

The cultural diplomacy of Poland and Hungary is implemented in Ukraine through various projects and programs related to music, cinema, theater, visual arts, literature, etc. There are music festivals, days of national cinema, meetings with cultural figures, etc. It should be noted the prestigious awards of the Polish Institute in the fields of fine arts (named after K. Malevich) and literature (named after J. Konrad), which are recognized by the world community. One of the priorities of the aforementioned institution is also the liberal democratic values' promotion. (*Woroniecka, 2013: 150*).

Poland and Hungary, as countries with relatively developed economies integrated into the EU common market, are economically attractive for Ukrainian labor migrants. In 2010–2012, the largest recipient countries of the Ukrainian labor force were Russia (43.2%), Poland (14.3%), Italy (13.2%) and the Czech Republic (12.9%). At that time, 1.9% of Ukrainian labor immigrants were in Hungary. (*Mihratsiinyi profil Ukrainy, 2016: 43*). After the events of 2014, the situation changes: Poland becomes the main recipient country, where 38.9% of Ukrainians immigrants work (2017), while in Russia – 26.3%, and in Hungary – 1.3% (*Mihratsiia v Ukraini: tsyfry i fakty, 2019: 8*). The attractiveness of Poland for Ukrainian labor migrants is explained by the simplified employment procedure, as well as the closeness of the Poles' language and culture, their positive attitude towards the Ukraine's citizens. At the same time, the need to learn the Hungarian language, which is not easy for Ukrainians, is a significant obstacle for employment in a neighboring state, where predominantly the Hungarian-speaking population of Transcarpathia migrates to.

It is worth paying attention to such a type of economic soft power as support for the so-called "ethnic business", which is quite actively carried out by Hungary in Transcarpathia. There were even specialized annual development programs: "2016 is the year of young entrepreneurs from among foreign Hungarians", "2017 is the year of family business of foreign Hungarians", etc. Especially for Transcarpathia, the "Egan Ede Economic Development Plan" was introduced. Its budget was about 104 million euros, which during 2016–2018 were allocated from the Hungarian state budget for the development of agriculture, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as tourism in the region. (*Mateleshko, 2021: 59*).

The main task of the informational soft influence is to spread an attractive image of the country through mass media (press, television, radio, Internet). It should be noted that Hungarian mass media often spread views similar to Russian propaganda (the total Ukrainization, the violation of the national minorities' rights in Ukraine, the impossibility of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration, etc). The anti-Ukrainian propaganda is present even in some educational materials for general education schools, in particular, in the geography textbook for the 8th grade, which is freely available on the world wide web (*Földrajz 8. IV*). It should be noted that this is already the manifestation of not soft, but sharp power.

A separate area of soft influence can be considered the purposeful and systematic pass-
porting of the Ukrainian population, carried out by Hungary. The country has significantly eased the conditions for obtaining citizenship since 2011: the simplified naturalization has been applied to anyone who can prove knowledge of the Hungarian language and his Hungarian origin (*2010. évi XLIV*). In fact, every Transcarpathian whose ancestors lived in one of the Hungarian states can obtain the citizenship of a neighboring country and the socio-economic opportunities associated with it. According to unofficial data, as of 2015, almost 100,000 Transcarpathians received Hungarian citizenship under a simplified procedure (*Mateleshko, 2021: 61*). A peculiar alternative to a passport is the Pole's Card – a document confirming a person's belonging to the Polish nation. It gives the right to a simplified procedure for obtaining a permanent residence permit in the Republic of Poland, an accelerated procedure for acquiring its citizenship,

as well as benefits for medical care, for studying at universities, etc. According to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during 2008–2021, more than 141,000 citizens of Ukraine received Pole's Cards (*Za piv roku «kartu poliaka»...*, 2021).

4. Conclusions

So, the soft influences' common characteristics of Poland and Hungary on Ukraine are: 1) conditions (soft power of both countries has a favorable ground, because Ukraine has chosen a pro-Western foreign policy course); 2) institutions (government structures, state and non-state funds, diplomatic institutions, educational institutions, public organizations, mass media); 3) goals (forming a positive image of states, spreading of their own and common European values, supporting foreign representatives of their nation, attracting Ukrainians to work and study); 4) directions (educational, cultural, economic, informational). At the same time, each country has its soft influence's distinguishing features: 1) the Hungary's soft power, unlike the Polish one, has rather limited geographical boundaries in Ukraine (the territory of Transcarpathia) and is closely related to the support of the Hungarian national minority; 2) the main feature of the educational direction of the Hungary's soft influence is that higher education, like school education, can be obtained in Ukraine's educational institutions in the Hungarian language; 3) Hungary's soft impact is accompanied by mass passporting of the Transcarpathia's population, which can carry potentially serious political and socio-economic threats; 4) the information influence of Budapest, which can be called a sharp power, is often associated with criticism of Ukraine and even anti-Ukrainian propaganda.

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