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«Український Інститут» як стратегія формування позитивного міжнародного іміджу України

Автори статті поставили за мету дослідити культурну дипломатію як дієвий конструкт міждержавного діалогу, яка повинна здійснюватися у тісному симбіозі функціонування як традиційних дипломатичних представництв, так і спеціальних культурних установ. З огляду на важливість міжкультурних комунікацій більшість впливових європейських держав створили мережі культурних інституцій, які діють за кордоном, виконуючи завдання інтенсифікації культурної взаємодії, сприяють розв'язанню політичних завдань і проблем позитивного міжнародного іміджу, налагодження глобальних комунікацій тощо.

Однак нині немає активної позиції України з упровадження політики культурної дипломатії, їй бракує стратегії та послідовності в діях. Український Інститут як один із конструктів м'якого впливу, сприятиме формуванню позитивного іміджу України та поширенню неупередженої та об'єктивної інформації про неї, що, нарешті, сприятиме розвитку конструктивних та тривалих відносин у інших сферах співробітництва між державами і, безумовно, стане потужним національним проектом на майбутнє.

Ключові слова: м'яка сила, культурна дипломатія, культурні інституції, Український Інститут, іміджева політика, зовнішня політика, Україна.

«Ukrainian Institute» as a strategic narrative of Ukraine's positive image making

The research aims to delve into the problem of systematic neglecting and denying of the tools of soft power in Ukrainian foreign policy. The key issue of the project is to disclose the importance of cultural diplomacy and explore the significance of different countries' cultural institutions abroad. The research highlights the examples of successful implementation of cultural diplomacy cases and its role in crafting the approaches in bridge-building between Ukraine and the world during the years of its gaining independence. The objective is to point out the value and the potential of such institutions in today's globalized world. Noteworthy, the Ukrainian Institute (UI) was established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in 2017. The key message of ours is to show that Ukrainian Institute could make drastic changes in the approaches to the cultural diplomacy of Ukraine by promoting a positive image of Ukraine around the world, fight stereotypes, foster business connections, facilitate mutual understanding, attract investments and tourist, and put our country on the map. We also have to deal with the syndrome of the international community fatigue in terms of Ukraine and its careless attitude and disconnectedness in reforming and advancing of key branches of the Ukrainian society as well as unsuccessful tackling of corruption issues. Thus, we need to concentrate our efforts on showing relatively new Ukraine, fight international community's unawareness and recognition of Ukraine, and give the voice to our rich and vibrant cultural sector.

Keywords: soft power, cultural diplomacy, cultural institute, Ukrainian Institute, image-building, foreign policy, Ukraine.

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"Cultural Diplomacy should be established in Ukraine.
But you should start creating it from the building of the country,
where Ukrainians will be living comfortable.
We should think that everything we are doing - we are doing for ourselves."

Iezhy Onuh

INTRODUCTION. Quoting the British cultural diplomacy expert Melissa Nisbet, "in the age of globalization, it would seem, that anything and everything could be labeled and understood as cultural diplomacy, and anyone and everyone is responsible for it". Today's age of anxiety and unease boils down to the fact that the quote is actually true. Regardless the term "*Cultural diplomacy*" is relatively new, though as a practice it has existed for centuries. Since antiquity – nations, states, and rulers, countering different scheming of a handful of political actors have initiated strategies to sell a positive image abroad to create a dialogue with other people.

Currently, the ultimate objective of cultural diplomacy, while crossing ethnic and geographic borders of neighbors with different backgrounds and mentality, aims to share the same values, to appreciate art and become culturally bound. The triumphant public diplomacy has become of paramount importance in the present-day globalised world - the reality, where culture, knowledge and communication are the core constructs of technological advance and economic thriving as well as social cohesion and sustainable development. Overall, cultural diplomacy – a vital tool for the 21st Century – implies the exchange of information, values, systems, traditions, ideas, and beliefs in all aspects of the society's life, namely, science, literature, art, music, and sports aiming at fostering mutual embracement and bridging cultures. The importance of cultural diplomacy has been emerging since soft power has grown out of culture, out of domestic values and policies, and out of foreign policy. Whilst public diplomacy extends beyond the formal diplomatic communications of a government to a foreign public, cultural diplomacy advocates that participation in exchange programs helps to further global peace, freedom, mutual understanding, international cooperation, and growth of human knowledge, and plays an important role in shaping how countries are perceived abroad. These activities can have a significant impact on international relations through cross-cultural communications³. Unfortunately, Ukraine continues to be a state, which doesn't have any coherent and efficient promotional strategy. The lack of the logical and consistent steps in the field of cultural diplomacy significantly decreases the effectiveness of Ukraine's soft power.

This research aims to delve into the problem of systematic neglecting and denying of the tools of soft power in Ukrainian foreign policy. The key issue of the project is to disclose the importance of *Ukrainian Institute* (UI) as a push-pull factor for creating and advancing positive image of Ukraine all over the globe. The research highlights the examples of successful implementation of cultural diplomacy cases and its role in crafting the approaches in bridge-building between Ukraine and the world during the years of its gaining independence. Our objective is to point out the value and the potential of such institutions in today's globalized world.

Noteworthy, the Ukrainian Institute was established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in 2017. The key message of ours is to show that Ukrainian Institute could make drastic changes in the approaches to the cultural diplomacy of Ukraine by promoting a positive image of Ukraine around the world, fight stereotypes, foster business connections, facilitate mutual understanding, attract investments and tourist, and put our country on the map. We also have to deal with the syndrome of the international community fatigue in terms of Ukraine and its careless attitude and disconnectedness in reforming and advancing of key branches of the Ukrainian society as well as unsuccessful tackling of corruption issues. Thus, we need to concentrate our efforts on showing relatively new Ukraine, fight international community's unawareness and recognition of Ukraine, and give the voice to our rich and vibrant cultural sector.

Cultural Diplomacy: definition. Cultural diplomacy is known for its ability to facilitate the process of making treaties and signing the agreements between the states, foster the cooperation and help

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³ Bohatyrets, V. (2017) *Cultural Diplomacy as a Vital Tool of Building International Bridges & Interactions* // International scientific conference "Modern Tendencies of Regional Cooperation: Ukrainian-Romanian-Moldavian Dimension", May 25-26, 2017, Chernivtsi, Ukraine. (Unpublished conference paper. Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University).

in gaining the consensus in the negotiations, still, governments put much solid expenses and attention into the fields devoted to the area of formal diplomacy. Noteworthy, cultural diplomacy has existed in our societies for centuries, the roots of it we can see in the exchanges of ideas, traditions, tools and different aspects of life, while trading in ancient times, geographic discoveries or colonialism period.

Nowadays, diplomacy plays a vital role in the international relations. According to Kirsten Bound and Rachel Briggs' work "Cultural Diplomacy", "cultural exchange gives us the chance to appreciate points of commonality and, where there are differences, to understand the motivations and humanity that underlie them. As identity politics exert an increasing influence on domestic and international exchanges, these attributes make culture a critical forum for negotiation and a medium of exchange in finding shared solutions." For a better understanding what cultural diplomacy is, why it exists and how it works let's determine its definition. Oxford dictionary defines cultural diplomacy as "the furthering of international relations by cultural exchange; the practice of publicizing and exhibiting examples of one's national culture abroad".

According to "Cultural Diplomacy, Political Influence, and Integrated Strategy" cultural diplomacy is a type of soft power and public diplomacy, which means "exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding" 6. We cannot talk about cultural diplomacy without taking into consideration the work of J. Nye about "soft power", in his research he determines public diplomacy as the part of soft power and describes it as: "the ability to persuade through culture, values and ideas, as opposed to 'hard power', which conquers or coerces through military might." Basically, the best way is to describe the phenomenon of cultural diplomacy as the set of actions that promote the ideas, values, traditions and many other aspects of culture and national identity abroad aiming the coherence of bilateral and multilateral relations and enhancing cultural, social, and economic ties between the nations. Cultural Diplomacy efforts can help to build trust between different nations, ethnicities and peoples, for the policy makers it raises chances to reach political, military or economic agreements. Furthermore, it demonstrates some values and interests of one particular state to other on the international arena, makes the influence on foreign society's active members and creates a positive agenda for collaboration giving a thought to the policy differences.

Cultural diplomacy has two dimensions: theoretical and practical ones. The theoretical aspect includes basic concepts, methods, ideas and notion, facilitating the process of understanding, decreasing the level of mistrust, hatred, and counterbalances between the states and gives the recommendations how to promote cultural debates on the base of openness and tolerance. The practical aspect, on the other hand, is the implementation and implication of the theoretical aspects into the real circumstances, applying the models created and developed throughout the history by institutions, think-tanks, diplomatic structures, states, and communities. Practical approach includes cultural exchange, international exhibitions, delegations, competitions in wide variety of spheres.

Consequently, cultural diplomacy requires respect to the cultural diversity and recognition of nations' heritage, it demands a long-term commitment to the idea supported by justice, interdependence and equality, promoting global peace, stability, and sustainable development; and enhancing global intercultural dialogue.

Methodology. The major and key approaches to the study consist in data collecting and desk research (the secondary research). Desk research involves using synthesis of already existing research rather than primary research, where data were collected through the research subjects or experiments. In particular, our case of desk research of cultural diplomacy of Ukraine and the creation of UI, such sources as databases, books, online magazines, different websites, and online published interviews with the professionals, government publications, and NGO's statistics were used. Desk research helped to determine the knowledge that is already known and what new data has to be collected to fulfill the research design. Due to analysis of the secondary sources it became obvious that there is a huge gap in the public information about the establishing of UI. Even the appeal to the MFA of Ukraine

⁵ Cultural diplomacy. Definition of cultural diplomacy in English by Oxford Dictionaries.

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⁴ Bound, K., & Briggs, R. (2007). Cultural diplomacy. London: Demos.

⁶ Waller, M. (2009). *Cultural Diplomacy, Political Influence, and Integrated Strategy, in Strategic Influence: Public Diplomacy, Counterpropaganda, and Political Warfare*, Washington, DC: Institute of World Politics Press, p. 74.

⁷ Nye, J. (2004). Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics, Cambridge: Perseus Books, p. 22.

with the request to provide some information concerning the structure, budget and strategic vision of the development of UI for the next 5-10 years became unsuccessful.

Nevertheless, desk study helped to carry out the map of reliable and appropriate sources and stakeholders. Obtained information from the literature, websites, published interviews with representatives of different organizations, and considering governmental documents allowed to create background information on the operation of cultural institutions abroad and the importance of its establishing by Ukraine. The sources research was used to carry out the role and the missions of cultural institutions abroad, its structure, ways how to manage them, its influence on the networking and creation of intercultural dialogue, promotion of one's country's values and traditions. The evaluation of three important national cultural institutions as *British Council* (UK), Alliances Français (France), *Goethe-Institut* (Germany) and its specific case studies allowed getting more in-depth information about the role of such structures in the forming of cultural diplomacy policy. The research also shows the potential role that such cultural institutions play in developing external cultural relations with certain countries.

Research concerning Ukrainian Institute was made mainly on the basis of the official documents about its establishing and interviews with foreign and national experts in the field of cultural and public diplomacy. Gained information helps to estimate the importance of the establishing of the UI as an efficient institution that could promote our country abroad. However, it is hard to evaluate the accomplishments of UI throughout 2017 due to the lack of official information about the work which is done.

Overview of Ukraine's cultural diplomacy. Nowadays, it's quite relevant for Ukraine to improve its reputation in the context of unsuccessful process of implementation of promised reforms after the Revolution of Dignity. Ukraine should struggle with the attempts of Russian Federation to undermine our image in foreign mass media by showing our country as a failed state. Thus, all the efforts and substantive resources should be put into the development of smart, efficient, and robust strategy in the field of public diplomacy.

The first attempt to start building positive image of Ukraine was done only after almost ten years after the declaration of independence. In the book "Games of reflections: how Ukraine is seen by the world" T. Vodotyka states that probably the catalyst for some intentions to improve Ukrainian image was the Cassette Scandal or also known as Tapegate or Kuchmagate and the recordings that revealed the transfer of the Ukrainian defense system 'Kolchuha' to Saddam Hussein's Iraq⁸. Eventually, in 2003 was developed the *state program to ensure the positive international public perception of Ukraine for 2003-2006*. Among the particular measures that were supposed to be implemented were improving the network of Ukrainian mass media abroad, facilitating the development of the World Agency of Radio and Television "Ukraine and World", and establishing the competition on the best highlight of Ukrainian content in the foreign mass media⁹. Furthermore, in 2011, during four months such TV channels as BBC and CNN were casting the video "Ukraine. All About You". The aim was to show that Ukraine is an open and secure country for business investments.

Before the Euro 2012, Ukraine started showing short videos on the international channels "High Time to See Ukraine" and "Switch on Ukraine". In 2015 the Department of Public Diplomacy was established under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After its establishment some measures were taken to build the favorable image of Ukraine by implementing centralized sharing of trustful and truthful information about the conflict with Russia, annexation of the Crimea peninsula, war in the Eastern part of Ukraine. The top priorities of the Department are: providing reports on bridging enduring ties with foreign politicians and heads; making analytical reports concerning economic, military, international affairs, making long-term forecasts, revealing decision-making processes, etc.

In the interview Olga Zhuk, an ex-coordinator of the cultural diplomacy at the MFA, states "the establishment of the Department of cultural diplomacy under the MFA in 2016 can be seen as a breakthrough. This department has provided support for about 50 cultural institutions and initiatives in

⁹ Law of Ukraine «*Pro zatverdzhennya Derzhavnoyi prohramy zabezpechennya pozytyvnoho mizhnarodnoho imidzhu Ukrayiny na 2003-2006 roky*», Available from: http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1609-2003-%D0%BF [Accessed 23 April, 2016].

⁸ Vodotyka, T., Magda E. (2016). *Games of reflections: how Ukraine is seen by the world* / Ed. O. Kandyba. – X.: Vivat, p. 84.

terms of solving logistics issues, visa assistance, counseling and advice, help in finding partners and sponsors, and communication with Embassies". ¹⁰

Even though there is not much support for cultural diplomacy from the government, some successful examples of the creation of positive image of Ukraine by civil society do exist. In 2016 Ukraine was the guest of honor at the Frankfurt Book Fair and the Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs joined forces with the Ukrainian Association of Publishers and the three largest literary events in Ukraine: Book Arsenal, Lviv Publishers' Forum and Meridian Czernowitz¹¹. One of the most successful cases in the promotion of Ukraine's image was the design made for the Eurovision Song Contest in 2017. "Beads of Glory" or "Celebrate Diversity" won a prestigious prize Best of the Best in the Communication Design nomination at the Red Dot Awards. The design was created by Banda Agency together with Republique. The creators of logo and slogan for Eurovision described it like that: "we started looking for the symbol that would be authentic for Ukrainian culture as well as identify mission of the contest. Therefore, as a basis for Eurovision-2017 visual identity we have chosen traditional Ukrainian necklace, elements of which symbolize participants of the contest. Bead after bead, countries, which take part in Eurovision together create a captivating celebration of music." ¹²

A great activity in the sphere of Public Diplomacy was addressed to the Ukrainian Diaspora as the participants of some projects, organized by the government and public diplomacy initiatives. In the article "*Promotion of Ukraine's Cultural Diplomacy in the EU*" N. Pipchenko states that "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has established 29 culture and information centers as a part of diplomatic missions of Ukraine in Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovak Republic, Spain, Turkmenistan, the US, Uzbekistan, the Consulate General of Ukraine in Istanbul, New York and Munich. In general, there should be 29 missions in 26 countries. The legal basis for establishment of culture and information centers of Ukraine abroad is a Presidential Decree of February 20, 2006, titled On Culture and Information Centers in Diplomatic Missions of Ukraine"¹³.

So to conclude, starting since the 2000s Ukraine has been implementing the initiative called "Year of Culture", which had a significant impact on the development of practical part of the cultural diplomacy, even though these events were pretty costly, complex, and financially expensive. This initiative took place in such countries as France, Russia, Poland, Georgia, Egypt, Germany, China, Japan, Turkey, Austria and many more.

Consequently, organization of such event set the beginning of the process of establishing mutual understanding between the distinctive cultures. What is more, all these events helped to form the cultural contacts, interaction of cultural values, emerging of new forms of cultural activity, and getting practical skills in the managing process of the cultural diplomacy strategy.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UKRAINIAN INSTITUTE (UI): Prerequisites to the formation of UI. It is worth asking the question *how* cultural diplomacy functions in Ukraine. Noteworthy, the Department of Cultural Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine was established in 2015. For the present, despite having a rich history and heritage, prominent achievements in science and technology, and being home to a number of UNESCO world heritage Sites, Ukraine's vibrant culture still remains quite unknown abroad. Nowadays, the responsibility for the promotion of Ukraine's culture abroad involves two governmental bodies: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture. In 2016 the draft of the establishing of Taras Shevchenko Institute, just like worldwide known Goethe or Adam Mickiewicz Institutes, was created by the Ministry of Culture. At the beginning of 2017, the MFA took the responsibility for establishing Ukrainian Institute at the same year in four different countries – Warsaw, Rome, Berlin, and Paris. Regrettably, these institutions are still not established due to the continuing process of formation of UI.

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 Ibid.

¹² Eurovision 2017 brand video. (2017). Banda agency Republique. (n.d.), Available from http://banda.agency/eurovision, [Accessed 25 October, 2017].

¹³ Pipchenko, N. (2017). *Promotion of Ukraine's Cultural Diplomacy in the EU*. Available from: http://www.zurnalai.vu.lt/politologija/article/viewFile/10745/8838, [Accessed 12 May, 2017].

According to N. Pipchenko "the goal of the Ukrainian Institute should be the promotion of national cultural product, popularization of modern Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian scientific and cultural life, dissemination and protection of Ukraine's cultural heritage and tourism potential, enhancing international cooperation and cultural exchanges in the fields of culture and art, cinema, education, scientific and technical activities. Representative offices of the Institute are planned to be opened in Poland, the Baltic States, Georgia, Belarus, Czech Republic, Romania, the US, Canada, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Great Britain, France, China, Japan and India"¹⁴

In late June 2017, the Chamber of Ministers decided to pass the law on establishing the Ukrainian Institute to boost the popularization of Ukraine abroad, promoting its image, culture, language, heritage, and presenting its tourist potential. We could emphasize some of the main reasons why the Ukrainian Institute should be created and why Ukraine needs this establishment, they are as followed:

- establishing of UI could start a systematic communication among the governmental institutions and NGOs in the context of common paradigms, cultural interaction between the representatives of different cultural fields, and increase the credibility and accountability of employees.
- giving the push to the creation of independent cultural export content and put the cultural sphere out of ministry administrations;
- creating the mechanisms of transparent and open selection process of choosing grants, tender programs, etc.
- including UI to the global cultural processes and representing Ukraine's cultural products worldwide.

Nevertheless, the accomplishment of UI will be determined by the amount of the financial aid, highly-qualified and competent employees, and the smart way of implementing strategies and tactics. According to the data of 2017, the MFA decided to allocate 22 million UAH for the UI's functioning.

According to the Statute of the Ukrainian Institute, it is a governmental agency, creating its own organizational, structural, administrational and other circumstances for popularization of Ukraine abroad, facilitates the process of international cooperation in the cultural field, foster Ukrainian cultural integration to the global cultural space. The UI is financially dependent on government; it is non-profitable organization, coordinated by the MFA. The main goal of UI is to present contemporary Ukrainian culture, scientific innovations, increase positive perception of Ukraine abroad, integrate our country into the global art, scientific and educational areas¹⁵.

The main functions of the UI are supposed to be:

- creation and popularization of the modern Ukrainian image to increase the recognition on the international arena;
- implementation and assistance in the cooperation the projects, targeted on international cultural and scientific cooperation and exchanges.

General tasks of UI are as followed:

- popularization of the Ukrainian cultural heritage and contemporary cultural industry with the help of the tools of cultural diplomacy to foster the development of cultural tourism, implication and engagement of foreign investments to Ukraine;
 - promotion of the Ukrainian language abroad;
- evaluation of the foreign cultural environment with the aim to integrate our cultural products into the global cultural society, establishment of institutional contacts and additional possibilities for the Ukrainian artists, facilitate the process of enhancing the cooperation in the sphere of culture and sustainable development of international cultural relations and increase trust to Ukraine;
- collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Information and others in coordinating projects abroad.

It should be emphasized UI's top priorities will include the coordination and organization of the cultural events, exhibitions, expositions, forums, round tables, movie nights, concerts, plays aimed to build the dialogue with the foreign audience. The UI's activity will be also based on the implementation of the effective system of financing of the cultural exchanges and trips for the Ukrainian artists, cultural activists and scientists. These people will show Ukraine as an innovative, modern, and open

¹⁵Ukrayins'kyy instytut: m"yaka syla dlya prosuvannya suchasnoyi Ukrayiny u sviti – Novyny. (2017).

¹⁴ Pipchenko, N. (2017) Promotion of Ukraine's cultural diplomacy in the EU.

country. The UI will create the background for implementing the program of learning Ukrainian language and dissemination of Ukrainian institutions, projects, and initiatives abroad.

In its activity the UI is guided by the principles of transparency, professionalism (involving business, civil society, foreign experts), and neutrality to political parties, religious confessions and civil movements, serving only to the ideas of general human rights, values, and humanism, at the same time paying close attention to the basic international rules and standards in the field of the cultural development¹⁶.

Conclusion: Prospects for UI. The establishment of UI could become a great response to the challenges that Ukraine is facing concerning systematic cooperation between the state and the nongovernmental organizations in the questions of promoting contemporary Ukrainian culture abroad. Unfortunately, for the governmental structures it's very hard to have the qualitatively and consistently promotion policy without integrating with the civil sector, cultural NGOs abroad. The key tasks of the UI are: implementing grant programs, supporting promotional Ukrainian cultural projects, creating educational programs and platforms to facilitate the process of communication between the members of governmental agencies with the activists and managers of the cultural field from the civil sector, coordinating the participation of Ukraine in the big international exhibitions, expositions, conferences, and festivals, establishing the network of international offices.

The basic principles of the UI are the transparency and autonomy. The UI was established to promote Ukrainian culture abroad and create new mechanism of effective foreign cultural policy and facilitating the process of solving a set of problems between internal and external structures, which are backing off the development of cultural diplomacy in Ukraine.

To our great regret, the UI hasn't implemented its prime goals since its establishing. Currently, a process of selecting the director for the UI is in the progress. It's not even clear if there is a long-term strategy for the nearest 5-10 years for the enactment of the UI. There is a huge problem in terms of the building up the UI the image both in Ukraine and abroad. After the years of negation and deniability of the important sector of soft power we have to concentrate all the forces on sharing and spreading as much high-quality information as possible about any changes in our cultural policy. Ukrainian Institute should prioritize the idea that the rich Ukrainian cultural heritage can significantly contribute to projecting the expressly new image of Ukraine not only abroad but inside of our country as well.

The achievement of the UI is directly related to the proper investment and financial support, which would have a great impact on the prosperous cultural initiatives made by Ukraine. Indispensable steps should be taken in enhancing international mobility. Academic and cultural mobility will help Ukrainian young people to become the global citizens, try a role of ambassadors, and increase their employability. It's becoming a global trend to rely on each individual citizen to create a positive image of their nation abroad instead of putting this role on traditional diplomacy.

All in all, a designed *UI* is expected to facilitate the investment in education, culture, art, and help to change some of the external and even internal problems, bridging the gap of unawareness about the Ukrainian identity, cultural heritage, history, and its policy on the world stage. Furthermore, it is clearcut future vision; countries will increasingly rely on their individual citizens to shape a positive image of their nation abroad, instead of leaving this role to traditional state-to-state diplomacy. In terms of Ukraine study case, it demonstrates the value of government collaboration with various actors to favor an influential, successful, and positive image-making abroad that is of vital importance for future cultural landscape that harmonizes the whole globe.

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