

Democratic Values as the Source of Ukrainian «Soft Power» Policy

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The article analyzes the significance of democratic values as an important source of Ukrainian «soft power» policy. It also investigates negative tendencies that take place at the present stage of implementation of «soft power» policy in Ukraine. Moreover, the conclusion about the necessity of accomplishing a number of conditions for a successful implementation of foreign policy strategy of «soft power» in Ukraine and also improvement image of the country in the global community has been drawn.

Keywords: «soft power», Ukraine, democracy, civil society, corruption, principles of international law.

I. Introduction

At the beginning of the 21st century states have come across novel international phenomena which confirmed the ineffectiveness of «hard power» while dealing with the challenges of modernity. Under such circumstances there is a need to develop alternative and more effective ways to implement national interests in the system of international relations. Thus, much of the developed nations of the world refuse the only «hard» format of transacting their foreign policy, gradually giving it «soft» hue. Ukraine also does not remain aside of global transformations, identifying priority aim of state policy as development and improvement of the «soft power» strategy. It creates prerequisites for the expansion of interstate cooperation and investment opportunities positioning Ukraine on the international arena as a developed democratic state.

II. State of Research

The concept of the «soft power», its instruments, and resource base have been investigated by such foreign researchers as J. S. Nye, R. O. Keohane, Z. B. Bzhezynskiy, B. Gill, Y. Huang, etc. Among the representatives of national political science one should distinguish the works by A. Lutsenko, I. Slisarenko, M. Kapitonenko, V. Tronenko, Ye. Kaminskyi, etc.

J. S. Nye being the founder of the «soft power» concept, treats it as the ability to achieve the desired result not by coercion or payments, but through appeal, the source of which is the internal and external values of a state [23, p. 11]. In the modern international system democratic values which are realized in the domestic structure and in international cooperation are perceived positively. During one of the discussions, the researcher noted that Ukraine has attracted many people, not only in the U.S. but also around the world, by moving towards democracy and respect towards human rights. Therefore, on the conviction of J. S. Nye, «soft power» of Ukraine presupposes the development and maintenance of democratic ideals [2]. Thus, the aim of the paper is to

analyze Ukrainian system of democratic values as an important issue of its «soft power» strategy.

III. The main material

At the beginning of the 1990s, Ukraine declared democratic priorities in the conduct of its internal policy. Fundamentals of regime are noted in the basic law – the Constitution of Ukraine which determines the principal governmental as the one of developing and strengthening of democratic issues. In particular, Article 1 of the Chapter I of the Constitution of Ukraine mentions that «Ukraine is a sovereign, independent, democratic, social, lawful state» [6].

Being a democratic country, Ukraine declares adherence to the six basic principles of democracy, namely: the principle of recognition and protection of human rights (Article 3, the Chapter I of the Constitution of Ukraine, which provides a detailed definition of human rights and freedoms in our country); national sovereignty (Article 5, 7, 17, 69, 70, 71, 72, 124, that reveal the ways of its implementation); division of power into legislative, executive and judicial one (Article 6, the Chapter IV-IX of the Constitution of Ukraine, which specifies the credentials of the branches of government); rule of law (Article 8, 55, 56, 59, 62, 63, that capture the human right to judicial protection of its rights); the recognition of property rights and equality of all forms of ownership in the face of the law (private, collective, state, municipal) (Articles 13, 14); political, economic, ideological, and cultural diversity (Articles 15, 10, 11) [6].

Notwithstanding the fact that Ukrainian political system is considered to have democratic status, the actual level of democracy in the state has, according to the main indicators, significantly decreased. Thus, according to the international NGO Freedom House, Ukraine of 2012, belongs to the group of «partly free» countries. According to the scale of evaluation, where 1 is the best result, and 7 is the worst, freedom ratings equal to 3.5, civil liberties to 3 and political rights to 4 points [20].

TABLE I
RATE AND AVERAGE ESTIMATES OF TRANSITION,
WHERE 1 – THE BEST RESULT, 7 – WORST [22]

Ukraine (2012 points)	
Democracy Points	4.82
Regime Classification	Transitional Government or Hybrid Regime
National Democratic Governance	5.75
Electoral Process	3.75
Civil Society	2.75
Independent Media	4.00
Local Democratic Governance	5.50
Judicial Framework and Independence	6.00
Corruption 6.0	0

The reasons for the situation, first of all, are in the lack of national unity and clear government strategy for democratic reformation. A significant obstacle for democratic transformation is the presence of high level of property stratification, characterized by non-development of the middle class and a large proportion of the poor. The inefficiency of appropriate legal framework for state processes regulation and the absence of influential political elite, which would adhere to democratic values and be the mobilization tool for the national masses around the idea of democratic change, make the anxiety. That is why a large proportion of the population is marginalized and is not aware of the importance of democratic reforms and so reveals the political passivity.

The full implementation of Ukraine's foreign «soft power» policy suggests the development of conceptual framework of civil society as the system independent from the state social institutions and relationships, which provide the conditions for self-realization of individuals and groups, private interests and needs [1].

Although Ukraine has a Coordinating Council for Civil Society Development [7], and Presidential Decree «About State Policy Strategy for Civil Society Development in Ukraine and Priority Measures for its Implementation» (2012) [16], the process of stabilizing civil society in our country is really slow. The current situation is provoked by certain factors. Among them there is political ignorance of Ukrainian citizens, causing reluctance to impact the political and socio-economic situation in the country. Equally important is the lack of institutional component, and therefore imperfection of the legal framework that regulates the civil society activity. The major obstacle may be the lack of experience in cooperation of public authorities with civil segments, in efficient social and economic policy, reducing the freedom of information, pressure on the media sources, delivered by government agencies, etc.

Internal political development of Ukraine is an integral part of forming the image of our country on the international arena. It is evident that the lack of internal stability in the political sphere, different interpretations of democratic values, inadequate legal framework do not promote a positive perception of Ukraine by the international community.

For many countries, modern Ukraine is considered as the state with selective justice, high level of corruption, political instability, etc. For instance, Polish experts in the Survey of the Institute of World Policy, held in 2011, treat Ukraine as a country with a deficit of democracy, corruption, and the oligarchs [10, s.11]. Romanian experts follow the similar position and associate Ukraine with «immature democracy», «incoherent policy», and persecution of opposition [10, s.15]. Positive attitude towards Ukraine is also not promoted by the fact that our country is among the five leading countries for the number of complaints to the European Court of Human Rights [3]. However, at the same time, in the eyes of experts from Belarus,

Georgia, Moldova Ukraine appears as a friendly country and a strategic partner, indicating the existence of further increase of the positive image of our country [10]. This divergence of views can be explained as follows. For Poland and Romania as for the countries with mature democracy, indicators of democracy in Ukraine give reason to speak about its deficit and immaturity. As for the countries with positive associations, the commitment to Ukraine is stipulated by historical ties. In addition, comparing the data presented by Freedom House Organization, it can be noted that Moldova and Georgia are on the same democracy level Ukraine is [21, p. 15-16]. The commitment from the Belarusian side can be explained by the fact that for Belarus as for the country with an authoritarian regime, Ukraine exemplifies in the scheme of democratization.

Another important source of Ukrainian «soft power» policy is following the foreign policy values enshrined in the international law. Thus, in the UN Charter and the Declaration on Principles of International Law seven priority principles are identified as follows: non-use of force or threat of force, sovereign equality of states, equality and self-determination of nations and peoples, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, non-interference with the internal affairs of states, peaceful cooperation and conscientious accomplishment of contractual obligations under the international law. Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) has expanded the list by the principles of inviolability of borders, territorial integrity, respect, and protection of human rights [11].

It should be noted that during the years of independence, Ukraine has consistently adhered to the principles in conducting foreign policy. In this context, the implementation of the «soft power» policy provides for refusal of force or threats, cooperation, respect and protection of human rights. In reference to the peaceful solution of international conflicts, Ukraine has considerable positive experience, produced during the solution of the Transnistrian conflict. Indeed, the plan to solve the Transnistrian conflict «To adjustment through democratization» (known as «Yushchenko Plan») was provided for the reintegration of the Republic of Moldova by democratization of Transnistria [9, s.37-38]. The obvious is the position of Ukraine in resolving the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, in which our government insisted only on peace negotiations with the principles of inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of the states in the Caucasus region [5]. Today Ukraine takes active part in peacemaking in more than ten countries including Kosovo, Liberia, East Timor, Congo, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan etc. [8; 17].

Among other foreign values, which Ukraine adheres to the implementation of the «soft power» policy, one should distinguish the promotion of universal moral principles, participation in international and regional

organizations (Ukraine is a member of 27 international organizations), activity in solving international humanitarian problems, etc. In addition to that, in 2011-2012 Ukrainian part provided humanitarian assistance to the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Cuba, Japan, The Horn of Africa etc. (order to facilitate in dealing with the emergency situation) [12; 13; 14; 15]. In 2013 Ukraine provided humanitarian aid to refugees from Syria in the Middle East [18].

The efforts of the Ukrainian government are aimed at finding effective means for combating modern global threats. So, trying to solve the environmental problems of humanity, in 1992 Ukraine acceded to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer (1985), and in 1998 to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. It also cooperates with international organizations of the UN system in environmental protection (UNEP, UNDP, IAEA, FAO, GEF, etc.) [19]. Furthermore, it is difficult to ignore non-nuclear status of our state, which allowed to demonstrate to the international community an alternative way to disarm and solve global problems such as the threat of nuclear war.

Conclusion

Thus, at the present stage of realization of Ukraine's strategy of «soft power» in foreign policy a lot of problems arise to show the imperfection of domestic policy. Indifference of citizens to social life, distrust to the government, high level of corruption, pressure on the media and others carry out a devastating impact on the development of democratic values in the internal policy of Ukraine. Since the foreign policy of the state is an extension of the domestic one, the instability in the political life of a society creates serious obstacles for the foreign policy implementation, and in some cases, completely eliminates success in the international policy. Therefore, to implement Ukrainian «soft power» policy successfully means to clearly formulate the goals and objectives of the state functioning on the domestic and foreign levels. Another important condition is to understand the integrity of the objectives of the strategy (policy) and build a «bridge of transition» between domestic and foreign policy. Fulfillment of these conditions will allow our country not only to establish itself on the international arena as a developed democratic state and a reliable partner, but also to attract new investments and expand intergovernmental cooperation.

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