



“Ukrainian Public Diplomacy Lacks Organization, But Holds Promise”

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Introduction

Ukraine's declaration of independence on August 24, 1991 not only marked a significant break from its past status as a member of the Soviet Union; it also allowed Ukraine to begin its campaign to move forward with its new foreign policy objective, i.e. its "European choice."¹ While Ukraine has openly declared this goal since independence, twenty years later it still has not been accepted as a member state of the European Union (EU). Debates about the reasoning for its lack of membership are vast and include claims that Ukraine has not yet fully met the Copenhagen criteria required for EU membership, Ukraine's geopolitical location between the EU and Russia, and the problem that Ukraine is not seen as in line with the values and culture of the EU. Reality shows that while these assertions may indeed be partially true, a less discussed (but equally important) hindrance for Ukraine's accession goal is its current external image and the lack of a formal, well-organized public diplomacy apparatus to project a true image of modern Ukraine to the rest of Europe. This essay will explore the relationship between the EU and Ukraine, specifically focusing on the role that public diplomacy plays in that relationship. Ultimately, the essay will demonstrate the necessity of good public diplomacy for transition countries to gain a presence in the international arena, using Ukraine's struggles with the EU as a case study.

This study will challenge the boundaries of what public diplomacy entails. According to the Planning Group for Integration of United States Information Agency (USIA) into the Department of State public diplomacy is defined as follows: "Public Diplomacy seeks to

¹ "EU agrees visa liberalisation plan with Ukraine," *Kyiv Post*, November 22, 2010, accessed April 5, 2011, <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/90877/>.

promote the national interest of the United States through understanding, informing and influencing foreign audiences.”² And, while Hans N. Tuch, author of *Communicating with the World*, defines public diplomacy similarly, as: “Official government efforts to shape the communications environment overseas in which American foreign policy is played out, in order to reduce the degree to which misperceptions and misunderstandings complicate relations between the U.S. and other nations,” this essay will utilize the study of Ukrainian public diplomacy to expand this view and demonstrate that public diplomacy is not limited to the actions of a state.³ Rather, public diplomacy can be enacted by various actors for the good of the state or international relations. The study of the intricacies of public diplomacy for a state’s external image will support the thesis that although many actors may be working informally to better a state’s public diplomacy, a state’s government (particularly in transition states) ultimately needs to create a formal, organized apparatus to work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other actors to enhance its relations with external populations and to create one cognitive, true image among the various images already projected.

To begin, this essay will explore prior literature on Ukrainian-EU relations, demonstrating a focus on the EU’s political dominance over Ukraine’s European aspirations. Next, the bulk of the essay will explore Ukrainian-EU relations from a public diplomacy perspective, beginning with a brief history of relations between the EU and Ukraine. The effects of Ukrainian policies on its external image will then be discussed, presenting a puzzle of whether domestic policies and events naturally act as forms of public diplomacy, and ultimately, concluding that policies are tools to be utilized to enhance a state’s public diplomacy. The essay will continue on to take a look at particular public diplomacy efforts taken by the Ukrainian

² “What is Public Diplomacy?” last modified January 5, 2008, <http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/1.htm>.

³ “What is Public Diplomacy?”

government, followed by a section on how other states act on behalf of Ukraine to better its international image. It will end with a look at the power of NGOs for Ukraine's public diplomacy goals, demonstrating that a mixture of public diplomacy tools and projects are best for a state to reach a foreign audience.

Past Literature: EU enlargement and political influences on EU-Ukraine relations

The EU grew from fifteen members to twenty-five in 2004, and then to twenty-seven in 2007. This enormous enlargement round to include much of Central and Eastern Europe has led to speculations about further enlargement plans, or the lack thereof. Recent literature focuses on the idea of "enlargement fatigue" as a strong factor in EU-Ukrainian relations.⁴ Some EU members assert that before they can attempt to admit any more members, they must first get their own house in order. Others claim that EU leaders are not looking to expand further any time soon, leading them instead to attempt to appease Eastern European states through the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and, more recently, the Eastern Partnership (EaP). In Nathaniel Copsey's book, *Public Opinion and the Making of Foreign Policy in the 'New Europe,'* Copsey describes the goal of the ENP as an attempt "to provide a framework for relations between the European Union and its neighbours, and to 'Europeanise' those states on its periphery *without* the prospect of membership."⁵ It must be stressed that neither of these EU policies (the ENP or EaP) mention the possibility of eventual accession for partner states. Literature thus emphasizes that the implications for Ukrainian accession are not excellent.

⁴ "Enlargement fatigue," last modified September 27, 2006, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2006/sep/27/politics.eu>.

⁵ Nathaniel Copsey, *Public Opinion and the Making of Foreign Policy in the 'New Europe': A Comparative Study of Poland and Ukraine* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 1.

In addition to the literature on the ENP and EaP, recent works on Ukraine have focused on the implications of Ukraine's historical relations with Russia and, further, Russia's lack of enthusiasm for Ukraine's EU accession. Currently, Ukraine is an important buffer between the EU and Russia; thus, if Ukraine were to become an EU member state that barrier would disappear, which is undesirable for the EU. Additionally, Russia has openly opposed Ukrainian membership.⁶ Ukraine's relationship with Russia is important in various aspects for both countries. First, the largest minority in Ukraine is Russian, and the largest diaspora of Ukrainians is in Russia. Stephen White *et al.* explain: "The importance of good relations with Russia [is] not simply a matter of trade and international stability. One more particular reason [is] that many [Ukrainians...have] personal or family relationships."⁷ Second, the economies of the two states rely heavily upon one another; Ukraine obtains the majority of its energy from Russia. Scholar Dusica Lazarevic explains: "Russia considers...Ukraine...as part of its 'near abroad' and 'sphere of influence.' [Ukraine] largely depend[s] on Moscow in terms of energy and commerce, and... [is an] important transit countr[y] for the transport of Russian oil and gas."⁸ Third, Ukraine holds historical and cultural significance for Russians. Dmitry Trenin, author of *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border between Geopolitics and Globalization*,

sees the matter of identity, not territorial issues, as the core problem between the two countries: 'The initial political choice ('Ukraine is not part of Russia'), [which was] essentially negative, was comparatively easy to make and, surprisingly to many, also to carry out. The positive choice ('Ukraine is a part of Europe') was even easier to make, but it was extremely difficult to realize. Right

⁶ Nicole Gallina, "Ukraine Knocking at the Door? The EU-Ukraine Relationship after the Orange Revolution," in *Ukraine on its Meandering Path between East and West*, ed. Andrej N. Lushnycky and Mykola Riabchuk (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2009), 45.

⁷ Stephen White et al., "A European or a Slavic Choice? Foreign Policy and Public Attitudes in Post-Soviet Europe," *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 54, No. 2 (2002): 192.

⁸ Dusica Lazarevic, "NATO Enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia: Old Wine in New Bottles?" *The Quarterly Journal* Vol. 9, No. 1 (2009): 47.

now, Ukraine is caught between the two: it is no longer part of Russia, but not yet—and this is a long yet—part of organized Europe.’⁹

These connections present challenges for Ukraine to truly move toward its “European choice” because the decision separates Ukraine from Russia. Its persisting relationship with Russia is a massive problem for the EU because Russia continues to possess international strength and influence, allowing it to maintain some control over EU-Ukrainian relations—a fact that Ukraine is continuing to try to deal with. This Russian problem intervenes with Ukraine’s public diplomacy efforts and its attempts to separate from the past.

Discussion of Ukraine’s domestic policies is also utilized by EU leaders as a reason that accession has yet to be offered to Ukraine. Some argue that Ukraine remains a state in transition, and therefore, it has not made the necessary changes domestically to fully meet the Copenhagen criteria and to be ready for complete integration into the EU. Examples of political backwardness stressed are the remains of corruption in the public sector, lack of complete media freedom and a limited democracy. While Ukraine still has some steps to take, the state has indeed taken monumental strides, which external populations do not recognize due to the lack of a strong public diplomacy apparatus. Thus, in addition to making changes, Ukraine needs to communicate those transformations to the wider European public. One instance emphasized in the current literature in which Ukraine has been highly acknowledged for its domestic democratic strength was the Orange Revolution of 2004. Through the Orange Revolution, the Ukrainian population demonstrated, through peaceful mass protests, to the world that they would not stand for political corruption.¹⁰ The protests themselves were a testament to how far Ukraine has come. The government’s response and actions were equally important for both domestic and international audiences. Overall, literature on Ukraine’s relations with the EU focus on the

⁹ Ibid., 51.

¹⁰ Nicole Gallina, “Ukraine Knocking at the Door?” 41.

challenges that Ukraine has yet to overcome, but does not extensively discuss positive relations or Ukraine's public diplomacy.

Historical Ukraine-EU relations

Ukraine officially declared its European integration aspirations for the first time on July 2, 1993 in a Decision of the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine.¹¹ Following the parliamentary declaration closely, President Leonid Kravchuk “signed the decree ‘On Intergovernmental Committee on Cooperation with European Union’ on August 28, 1993. The committee became instrumental in preparation of signing and ratifying the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.”¹² Ukrainian leaders were adamant about informing both European leaders and the larger EU population that Ukraine was indeed a European state and intended to develop its foreign relations around that claim. Since 1993, relations between the EU and Ukraine have intensified as the two entities have attempted to develop a closer relationship. While the declarations were important official diplomatic steps, communicating them to the greater public would have made them significant tools of public diplomacy—an opportunity the Ukrainian government has missed due to its lack of a public diplomacy organization.

In this developing EU-Ukrainian relationship, Ukraine has been the dominant force among the two entities pushing for more integration and stronger relations. In June 1994 the Ukrainian government approved ‘Ukraine’s Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU’ (PAC). In 1998 Volodymyr Horbulin, Former Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, wrote:

¹¹ “Mission of Ukraine to European Communities: General Background,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, accessed April 7, 2011, <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/eu/en/556.htm>.

¹² Oleh Protsyk, “Domestic political institutions in Ukraine and Russia and their responses to EU enlargement,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 36 (2003): 429.

Ukraine's course towards full-scale integration into European and transatlantic structures of cooperation is an integral part of our efforts to contribute to a united and stable Europe. Nevertheless, we recognise the reality of differing speeds of integration and fully support the early accession...of those of our Central European partners who are further along in the process...We fully share and subscribe to the spirit of solidarity and common values of the Council of Europe, OSCE and the European Union.¹³

As a successful attempt at diplomatic efforts toward the EU, Ukrainian leaders have continuously given the EU time and space to meet Ukraine on common ground. Although Ukraine signed the PAC in 1994, it took the EU until 1998 to ratify the agreement. Once the PAC went into effect, Ukraine set forth on what some have described as its 'domestic homework,' officially labeled their 'road map,' later being replaced by annual Ukrainian Action Plans (beginning in 2005).¹⁴ Before an intensive partnership could be developed between Ukraine and the EU, Ukraine had to work toward meeting the Copenhagen criteria and the various requirements of any state hoping to become a member of the EU, a task that has been aided by both individual EU member states and the EU through the ENP and EaP.

In addition to working on attaining the Copenhagen criteria, by 2005 numerous events occurred to help push the Ukrainian-EU partnership to the next level. First, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine was an important demonstration of the developments that had occurred domestically within Ukraine, and EU members were eager to help encourage further development. Second, the EU added ten Central and Eastern European members to its ranks. Prior to that round of enlargement, as the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) looked at the repercussions of adding new members, it acknowledged in its 'Report & Policy

¹³ Volodymyr Horbulin, "Ukraine's contribution to security and stability in Europe," *NATO Review* Vol. 46, No. 3 (1998): 11.

¹⁴ Kataryna Wolczuk, "Implementation without Coordination: The Impact of EU Conditionality on Ukraine under the European Neighborhood Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 61, No. 2 (2009): 191.

Recommendations from the Conference on New European Borders and Security Cooperation’ that:

Enlargement of the European Union will create a new external EU border in the eastern part of the continent...For both practical and symbolic reasons, the management of this future border will have a profound impact on relations between the EU and the non-EU parts of Europe. It is very important for the EU to take all possible measures to facilitate the crossing of its borders by the citizens of states neighbouring the EU.¹⁵

In response to these obvious concerns, in addition to enlargement, the EU created the ENP to establish positive relations with its new borders, particularly those in Eastern Europe who had not been granted membership. The ENP’s stated goal was “to ‘promote stability and prosperity’ through stimulating political and economic reforms in its neighbourhood. ‘Stability and prosperity’ is to be achieved by transposing the EU’s values, norms and standards in exchange for ‘access to the common market.’”¹⁶ Ukrainian leaders expressed some displeasure with these steps taken by the EU because Ukrainians believed that the obvious developments in their domestic policies and the power of their democratic state, as demonstrated by the success of the Orange Revolution, would bring them closer to EU accession. Unfortunately, the ENP purposely did not mention prospects for future EU membership, creating a new sense that Ukraine was being held at arm’s length from membership.

Although the EU attempted to appease Ukraine and other non-EU Eastern European states with the establishment of the ENP, it was not seen as a sufficient policy by Ukrainian leaders who hoped for more. In response, specifically to Ukraine’s ambitions at a stronger partnership, the EaP was launched in 2009.¹⁷ The EaP permitted Ukraine to develop a greater

¹⁵ Ed. Joanna Apap, “Reshaping Europe’s Borders: Challenges for EU Internal and External Policy, Report & Policy Recommendations From the Conference on New European Borders and Security Cooperation,” *Centre for European Policy Studies* (2001): 9.

¹⁶ Wolczuk, “Implementation without Coordination,” 188.

¹⁷ Martin Dangerfield, “The Contribution of the Visegrad Group to the European Union’s ‘Eastern Policy: Rhetoric or Reality?’” *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 61, No. 10 (2009): 1742.

relationship with the EU. Since the establishment of the EaP, the EU has opened itself more to Ukraine and Ukrainian integration into particular EU policy areas has sped up drastically. At the EU-Ukraine Summit, in September 2008 an Association Agreement was established with a focus “on ‘deep free trade’ and a long-term perspective for a visa-free regime between the EU and Ukraine.”¹⁸ Steps are also now being taken to move Ukrainian integration into the European market forward. Although Ukraine still remains outside the EU, the relationship between the two has continued to develop. What Ukraine needs now is a strong public diplomacy effort toward the EU to demonstrate its recent developments and its ‘European-ness.’

Ukrainian domestic policies effect on its external image

Ukraine’s relationship with the EU has undoubtedly grown since 1991; but remaining hindrances on the possible enhancement of that relationship are Ukraine’s domestic politics, its lack of policy coordination and how those issues appear to foreign leaders. The massive bureaucracy in Ukraine and lack of political accountability keeps its governmental institutions and ministries from completing their tasks. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Economics (ME) and Ministry of Justice (MJ) all struggle making legislation that is in line with broader European laws, primarily because no one knows whose job it really is. The MFA holds a prominent role in the Government Committee on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and is responsible for external relations; the ME acts “as the real ‘engine’ for meeting [European] conditionality, especially as the largest share of priorities of the AP [Action Plan] is concerned with areas such as the economy, labour regulations and competition;” and the MJ is involved with the State Department of Legal Approximation and works to pass laws that will be

¹⁸ Gwendolyn Sasse, “The ENP and the EU’s Eastern Neighbours: Ukraine and Moldova as Test Cases,” in *The European Neighbourhood Policy in Perspective: Context, Implementation and Impact*, ed. Richard G. Whitman and Stefan Wolff (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010): 188.

aligned with EU standards.¹⁹ While all three ministries hold important positions aimed to develop Ukraine's alignment with the EU and hope for prominence above the others, (like all good bureaucratic bodies) none are willing to take blame for the lack of extensive reform. Therefore, as Ukraine has attempted to keep up with the AP and establish reforms, the process

exposes the persistent shortcomings of the Ukrainian post-Soviet bureaucracy, including its cumbersome decision-making processes, low administrative competence, unclear division of competencies and lack of coordination...Even in cases where priorities were specified in more detail, the implementation often has been slow and inconsistent.²⁰

Failure to coordinate and enact reforms on European level policies has created an air of disillusionment among foreign leaders who see Ukraine as an inefficient bureaucratic state without reform capabilities. Not only is the lack of coordination problematic for creating reforms, but it is also telling of Ukraine's public diplomacy deficiency and why a concerted effort has yet to be made—because it is not anyone's specific responsibility to engage with foreign publics.

Some Europeans continue to argue that Ukraine remains unable to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria for EU membership and doubt the quality of the Ukrainian democracy. The EU Commission describes the basis of the political criteria for membership as:

stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; [and] the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic & monetary union.²¹

Observers point to the lack of coordination among the various government ministries as evidence of Ukraine's inability to truly reform and claim that Ukraine remains plagued by its past.

¹⁹ Wolczuk, "Implementation without Coordination," 201-203.

²⁰ Ibid., 206.

²¹ "Enlargement: Accession Criteria," European Commission, last modified October 30, 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/criteria/index_en.htm.

Contrarily, as early as 1998, Ukrainian leaders have asserted that: “Since independence, we have adopted a new constitution fully consistent with European standards of a democratic state governed by the rule of law and guaranteeing civil rights.”²² While Ukrainian leaders may have claimed political freedom, Freedom House measures prior to 2006 rated Ukraine as only “Partly Free;” but in 2006, Ukraine made the official switch to a “Free” state due to the massive improvements made in 2005.²³ The change in its official, international status demonstrates the extreme changes that Ukraine has gone through in recent years. The incongruence between what current measures and studies show versus mass opinion on the status in Ukraine demonstrates the lack of proper image projection of modern Ukraine to the rest of the world, particularly Western Europe.

Although Freedom House’s measurements demonstrate the democratic advancement of Ukraine and, Ukrainians claim that accusations against their democracy are false, others continue to question the strength of the Ukrainian economy and its current status. Some Europeans assert that Ukraine’s economy is not ready for EU integration. As of 2002, “Moldova and Ukraine have been among the worst performers in the entire region, with a level of economic activity that, in 1998, was barely a third of the level that had been achieved at the start of the decade.”²⁴ These statistics from 2002 demonstrate a remaining international version of Ukraine as behind economically. While this remains a problem for Ukraine, its World Trade Organization (WTO) accession in 2008 does create new opportunities for Ukraine because it demonstrates that the Ukrainian economy has developed and reached the status of a free market economy, with the EU as its largest trading partner. Additionally, according to the CIA World Factbook, as of 2010,

²² Horbulin, “Ukraine’s contribution to security and stability in Europe,” 10.

²³ “Country Report: Ukraine,” Freedom House, accessed April 21, 2011, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2006>.

²⁴ White et al., “A European or a Slavic Choice?” 182.

only 9.8% of the Ukrainian economy is agricultural, while 32.3% is industry and 57.9% is services, and the growth rate in 2010 was 4.3%.²⁵ Evidence from the CIA World Factbook, the WTO and the World Bank all shows that the Ukrainian economy is developing; but its image internationally does not align with this reality. As long as Europeans believe Ukraine is behind economically, Ukraine will not be accepted as a viable future member of the EU.

While a large majority of Ukraine's external relations remains tainted by its past, one domestic incident was highly utilized by the Ukrainian population for the good of its image—the Orange Revolution of 2004. The revolution and its mass protests have been widely recognized by members of the EU as a step forward for Ukraine.²⁶ Through the revolution, the Ukrainian population demonstrated to the world that it would no longer stand for corruption by protesting the attempted false seizure of power, declaring a strong break from the past and the Soviet Union era. Also launched in 2004, by the EU, the “ENP fell short of what the Ukrainian ‘Orange’ politicians expected.”²⁷ The Orange Revolution was used to show the world that not only were Ukrainians willing to stand together for a true democracy, but they could do this peacefully and the government would respond positively. The use of the Orange Revolution as informal public diplomacy is a new angle on how public diplomacy can be enacted. The Orange Revolution acted as public diplomacy of an entire population toward the world, showing that Ukraine has changed, and as Professor Martin Dangerfield from the University of Wolverhampton in the United Kingdom argues, it “gave the clearest stimulus so far to a ‘European choice’ for Ukraine and created a much firmer political footing for active engagement with that country.”²⁸

²⁵ “Ukraine,” The World Factbook, last modified April 6, 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/up.html>.

²⁶ Dangerfield, “The Contribution of the Visegrad Group to the European Union’s ‘Eastern Policy,’” 1740.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1735.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1740.

Since 2004, Ukraine has primarily used the Orange Revolution as a catalyst for positive public diplomacy in the EU; but the negative implications of the Orange Revolution must also be recognized, i.e. the fact that Ukraine required mass protests to get its politics straight demonstrates something else. Instead of supporting Ukraine's movement toward a truer democracy, it may be argued that the Orange Revolution is evidence that Ukraine still has room to improve and growing pains to endure before it will be ready for EU membership. Tammy Lynch's article, *Ukraine's Post-Orange Evolution*, claims that "It is true that Ukraine has made important progress since 2004. Its people are free, its political pluralism is vibrant and its elections are fair...In order to preserve and advance progress already made, the country's institutions...still require serious and meaningful reform."²⁹ This demonstrates that while a positive image can be projected, reality must be aligned with that image, whether negative or positive. The implications of the Orange Revolution for Ukraine's public diplomacy toward the EU may be as important as the domestic impacts of the revolution itself. Focus groups conducted in both Poland and Ukraine have shown that "*every participant without exception* agreed on the seminal importance of the Orange Revolution in improving relations between the two countries."³⁰ Immediately following the revolution, the international community bonded together to support Ukraine. Additionally, later conferences discussing the events of the Orange Revolution, such as one at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland in 2005, have "contributed greatly to an awakening of interest in Eastern Europe."³¹ The Orange Revolution demonstrates that public diplomacy is not only the job of the government. The advocacy dimension of public

²⁹ Tammy Lynch, "Ukraine's Post-Orange Evolution," in *Ukraine on its Meandering Path between East and West*, ed. Andrej N. Lushnycky and Mykola Riabchuk (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2009), 165.

³⁰ Copsey, *Public Opinion and the Making of Foreign Policy in the 'New Europe'*, 34.

³¹ "Ukraine on its Meandering Path between East and West," ed. Andrej N. Lushnycky and Mykola Riabchuk (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2009), 1.

diplomacy can be the work of a whole population. The Ukrainian people acted together to affect both the domestic and international image of Ukraine, making a change and taking a stand.

Foreign efforts to improve Ukraine's international image

While conducting research for this essay, an interesting new development of public diplomacy emerged—the idea that external states and actors can be participants in a different state's public diplomacy. One of the strongest examples of this is the efforts taken by the Visegrad Group (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia) to act on behalf of Ukraine, in attempts to expedite its EU accession. The Visegrad Group (VG) has asserted its readiness to

assist countries aspiring for EU membership by sharing and transmitting their knowledge and experience. The Visegrad Group countries are also ready to use their unique regional and historical experience and to contribute to shaping and implementing the European Union's policies towards the countries of Eastern and Southern Europe. (VG Declaration 2004).³²

Since the accession of the four states to the EU, the VG members have created a new mission for their group with one of their main priorities being “participation in the formation and implementation of the Union's new neighborhood policy.”³³ Since that declaration, they have played an extremely active role in advocating for Ukraine and the EaP, soliciting support throughout the EU. In addition to direct advocacy toward the EU, the Visegrad states have also sought to better bilateral relations with their neighbors, particularly Ukraine. The states have sought to “maintain and expand cooperation and encourage people-to-people contacts in their respective countries and Ukraine.”³⁴ The importance of these personal contacts will prove vital in future relations between Ukraine and the greater EU. As the VG and Ukrainians participate in exchanges and enhance their contacts, interconnected relationships should develop. Further, due

³² Dangerfield, “The Contribution of the Visegrad Group to the European Union's ‘Eastern Policy,’” 1736.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1738.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1739.

to the open borders and massive interior relations within the EU, if Ukraine betters its relations with the VG, ultimately these relations will expand to the greater EU.

Ukraine's direct EU neighbors have an important role to play in Ukrainian public diplomacy and relations between the EU and Ukraine, but they are not the only external states that are important to the future of Ukrainian-EU relations. Other EU states, the United States and Russia are also significant. For example, the EaP was not truly a VG accomplishment (although they greatly supported the partnership). It was a Polish-Swedish proposal, demonstrating both the influence of Poland's membership on the EU to expand its relations with Ukraine and the significance of individual EU member states on overall EU relations with outside parties. In addition to EU members, other outside forces have a direct effect on the relationship between the EU and its neighbors. Due to the United States' relationship with Ukraine, the U.S. has continuously pressed for better relations between Ukraine and the EU. Former U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, described the importance of Ukraine both to the U.S. and to the EU, claiming: "Ukraine obviously is a very important partner for the United States and a good friend. We have long believed that Ukraine's independence, its democracy, is essential to a Europe whole and free and at peace."³⁵ Some may argue that the actions of external states are not works of public diplomacy, but are really only political actions. While this may be true to an extent, ignoring the implications of these actions on Ukraine's public diplomacy would be a mistake. The influence of outside connections and personal contacts is vital for greater public diplomacy—it creates relationships that ultimately influence political decisions and lead to further bonds.

Although some states have acted positively on behalf of Ukraine's efforts toward the EU, Russia has been a negative proponent against Ukrainian accession into the EU. (Not all public

³⁵ Lazarevic, "NATO Enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia," 53.

diplomacy is positive.) Russia has actively worked against Ukrainian public diplomacy efforts toward the EU. While Ukraine has outwardly asserted its “European choice” since breaking with the Soviet Union, its immense ties with Russia cannot be ignored—“substantial proportions of their own population [is] Russian by nationality, by language, or even by citizenship. [Ukraine is] heavily dependent on Russia.”³⁶ Ukraine cannot deny its connections with Russia, no matter how much it attempts to assert its cultural differences. Russia’s strong economic and energy influences on Ukraine have created massive strains on Ukraine’s attempts to break from its past. Some European countries believe that the lasting ties with Russia will keep Ukraine from EU accession. They fear angering Russia and creating international problems, which is part of the reason Ukraine remains an EU outsider.

Government-sponsored public diplomacy

One definition of public diplomacy refers exclusively to government actions toward a foreign public. This narrow definition does not demonstrate the cooperation that is necessary between governments and NGOs, the media, populations or even other governments. The definition of public diplomacy that this essay proposes is: public diplomacy is the actions of various actors, including governments, NGOs, individuals and any other actors engaged in communication with foreign populations to inform and influence them, in attempts to ultimately promote international connections and understanding, foreign policy goals or for external image building. Public diplomacy does not only refer to specified campaigns that are determined to result in positive public diplomacy; it encompasses much more, even at the government level. First, in the past, the Ukrainian government has relied heavily on government policies as a method of public diplomacy. Ukrainian officials assert that participation in international

³⁶ White et al., “A European or a Slavic Choice?” 187.

organizations, such as the WTO and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), are not only acts of official diplomacy, but also of public diplomacy—acting in an advocacy role and demonstrating the official state stance on important global matters. For example, the “importance of the MFA lies in its role in defining Ukraine’s strategy for Ukrainian political leaders to adopt in interactions with the EU.”³⁷ MFA and external political actions are used to show Ukraine’s role in the EU. Ukraine-EU summits have been of the highest importance in demonstrating Ukraine’s willingness to work closely with the EU to create stronger relations. The summits began in 1997 in Kyiv and have continued annually since, rotating the host city between Ukraine and different EU member states. The Ukrainian Mission to the EU asserts that: “The tradition of conducting Summit meetings is a clear evidence of the relations of strategic partnership between Ukraine and the European Union.”³⁸ Although the Mission does not explicitly state that the summits act for the sole purpose of public diplomacy, it does acknowledge the importance that the summits play in communicating the relationship between the two entities. This is an ambiguous, but necessary, form of public diplomacy—not clearly stated to be such, but presents obvious positive outcomes.

Second, the official declarations of the “European choice” of Ukraine have been used for the support of public diplomacy work. In October 2006, the Ukrainian Ambassador to the EU, Roman Shpek, defined Ukraine as a European country and asked “for its legal right to integrate: ‘Please publically recognize that Ukraine, like each European state, has a right to apply [for EU membership] according to Article 49.’”³⁹ Statements such as this one have the ability to appeal not only to government officials, but to the greater European population. This plea demonstrates

³⁷ Wolczuk, “Implementation without Coordination,” 202.

³⁸ “Political dialogue on the highest level,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, accessed April 10, 2011, <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/eu/en/30979.htm>.

³⁹ Nicole Gallina, “Ukraine Knocking at the Door?” 58.

Shpek's understanding that for Ukraine to eventually be considered for EU membership, the EU public plays an important role in supporting Ukraine's accession, hence his hope to have "public recognition." Third, the information on various Ukrainian embassy websites reveals the government's reliance on its individual leaders' actions to speak for themselves, as the websites focus greatly on the actions of the various ambassadors and the relations between heads of states. Currently, all five stories on the home page of L'Ambassade d'Ukraine en France (Ukrainian Embassy in France) refer to either official conferences or summits.⁴⁰ In one sense, this official focus may be seen as a governmental overstep and the government's un-engaging nature as a sign that it is ignoring of the significance of public diplomacy in EU-Ukrainian relations; on the other hand, one could argue that the Ukrainian government is relying on its official diplomacy to speak for itself.

Last, recently, the Ukrainian government has begun to understand the importance of its actions and attempted to communicate those to the international public. After the dismissal of the Ukrainian parliament in 2007, the government described the incident not as "democracy in crisis", [rather] it was 'a crisis within democracy.'⁴¹ The emphasized difference was vital for Ukraine, as it demonstrated to the European public that the Ukrainian democracy would last through challenges, which became even more evident with the following election in 2007 that "was notable for its calm normalcy."⁴² This event is similar to that of the Orange Revolution in that it shows the power of domestic actions to work as an influencer of foreign affairs.

The heavy reliance on government actions to speak for themselves without also having strong public diplomacy campaigns has created a problem in the past for Ukrainian public diplomacy toward the EU. For many years, Ukraine did not interact with the wider European

⁴⁰ "Actualites," Ambassade d'Ukraine en France, accessed April 23, 2011, <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/france/>.

⁴¹ Lynch, "Ukraine's Post-Orange Evolution," 165.

⁴² Ibid., 159.

public at all; instead it relied on its traditional, official diplomatic actions to speak for themselves. This has caused a problem for external Ukrainian image building because Ukraine is not projected to the world as one complete image, but as many individual politicians. Like the reform problems that have emerged by having numerous Ukrainian governmental ministries to deal with European relations, the Ukrainian government has yet to build one comprehensive public diplomacy strategy. In 2010 the Ukrainian government hired an international public relations and communications firm, Achelis & Partner Public Relations, to assess Ukraine's image abroad. Thomas Achelis, German PR expert, evaluated Ukraine's situation as such:

My impression is that Ukraine and its representatives didn't understand the importance of a positive country image. And unfortunately Ukraine's image today in the world – and especially in Western Europe – does not reflect the real situation. This means the country is seen worse than it is in reality. Ukraine is a beautiful country with a huge amount of beauties in nature, an impressive history, a great culture and outstanding personalities in many fields. But this is not communicated to the outside world. What is known in Western European countries is the “war” between the politicians, the end of the Orange Revolution, the dubious situation with the gas transfer from Russia, corruption and several other more or less negative stories. Conclusion: An enormous lack of communication.⁴³

Achelis's analysis describes the precise problem that Ukrainian public diplomacy is facing—a lack of communication and control. Building on his conclusion, it is obvious that the Ukrainian government needs to step up and create a plan to tackle its public diplomacy deficit problem.

Although image studies show that an overarching strategy has not yet emerged, the Ukrainian government has begun to respond recently to the need to project its image internationally through tourism projects like “Ukraine Invites” and “Euro2012,” and cultural diplomacy projects. Created in 2007 by the Ukrainian Cultural and Tourism Ministry, “Ukraine Invites” was an international advertising campaign, which included television advertisements on

⁴³ “Ukraine's Image-A View From Europe,” last modified January 25, 2011, <http://denisbohush.livejournal.com/1193.html>.

popular European channels, billboard advertisements in major European cities and advertisements in the German, French and Italian versions of *Reader's Digest Magazine*, in attempts to increase European tourism to Ukraine. Ukrainian tourism experts described the campaign as “the first of its kind by Ukraine, which trails far behind other countries in promoting tourism.”⁴⁴ This campaign raises important public diplomacy questions, such as: can tourism campaigns be considered public diplomacy? In this instance, with the background and the focus of the campaign, while its initial focus was to increase tourism to Ukraine, it could be argued that the campaign did have effects overall on Ukrainian public diplomacy. It featured an image of Ukraine abroad as a modern, likeable place—an image that had not previously been projected. Additionally, it was a government sponsored project focused toward Western Europeans, demonstrating a targeted group—the very group that Ukraine needs to target for its EU public diplomacy. The “Ukraine Invites” campaign was a vital first step for the Ukrainian government to take, but the campaign lacked evaluation. It would be helpful to measure the effectiveness of the project, particularly measuring the amount of people reached by it, any change of perception caused by the campaign and if European tourism numbers to Ukraine altered at all.

In addition to the 2007-2008 tourism campaign, Ukraine is in the midst of promoting a sports diplomacy campaign: “Euro2012.” The European Football Championship 2012 will be held jointly in Ukraine and Poland. While the event itself may have a positive public diplomacy effect in the future, the preparations for the event are just as vital. Ukraine is involved in two pre-event projects to boost interest in Ukraine. First, “Discover Ukraine” is a joint public and private project aimed at developing the international reputation of Ukraine. The project combines the efforts of various partners, including “businesses, public sector organizations, the media,

⁴⁴ “\$1.5 Million to Promote Ukraine’s Winter Tourism,” Tourism in Ukraine, accessed April 10, 2011, <http://www.ukrtourism.com.ua/en/events/1273/>.

destination making and communications experts...to show the best of Ukraine and highlight the steps Ukraine is taking to raise its international profile for tourists, investors and the general public.”⁴⁵ The “Discover Ukraine” project includes a “Made in Ukraine” dimension which is a video campaign to address the way Ukraine is seen now and how Ukraine wants itself to be seen in the future. The second campaign linked to “Euro2012” is “Eurolang 2012,” a cultural campaign to prepare visitors for the football event. “Eurolang 2012” is

addressed to participants, visitors and football fans coming to the European football Championship Summer 2012—Participants will need practical language guide and a cultural information package, helping them to participate in Euro2012 and move in the hosting countries without communication barriers. The aim of the project will be to develop comprehensive didactic materials related to the Polish and Ukrainian languages and cultures: online language courses and practical information guides....The method of teaching will be innovative, as it will be based on e-learning technology.⁴⁶

Ukraine and Poland have recognized the need to reach to the wider European public, particularly those who will travel to their countries for the event, and have responded by attempting to prepare those visitors to partake in the host cultures. This is a unique take on public diplomacy and sports diplomacy. The preparations and accommodations that are being made to prepare spectators have the opportunity to be extremely beneficial, especially as Ukraine is attempting to portray itself as a modern country with similar values to those of the EU. “Euro2012” will be vital for the future of Ukrainian public diplomacy, as many Europeans will partake in the events and visit Ukraine.

Cultural diplomacy as a whole has been a very strong part of the Ukrainian government’s public diplomacy, especially in relation to the advocacy dimension of public diplomacy. Ukraine’s participation in UNESCO has been very important internationally. Additionally, the

⁴⁵ “Discover Ukraine 2012,” accessed April 10, 2011, <http://www.discoverukraine.ua/about>.

⁴⁶ “Eurolang 2012 Project,” accessed April 10, 2011, <http://www.eurolang2012.com/content.php?idMenu=47564f8fb78e202851d4>.

government has been involved in many cultural campaigns to demonstrate the uniqueness and importance of preserving the Ukrainian culture, also emphasizing its European-ness and diversity. This stress on diversity is of utmost importance for Ukrainian public diplomacy toward the EU because it is a shared value. However, one immense problem for Ukraine's cultural diplomacy thus far has been that many of its events are actually focused inward and located physically within Ukraine, such as the Kyiv International Film Festival "Molodist", which is one of the most prominent festivals in Europe, specialized in cinematic debuts in student films. Another example of cultural diplomacy that lacks the outward power is the Centre for Cultural Management in Lviv, which prides itself as "a catalyst agent to encourage and support growth and development, to raise awareness among policymakers and the larger community of the role of and value for culture and to act as a model for other initiatives around the country." Cultural preservation and enhancement projects are important, but so far, Ukraine has missed its opportunity to project its cultural as a form of public diplomacy. Overall, Ukraine's official governmental public diplomacy is still in a development stage, and the key to future formal public diplomacy will be the creation of an official apparatus to plan and enact public diplomacy campaigns.

Non-governmental public diplomacy

In addition to official government public diplomacy, non-governmental actors have been vital for Ukraine's public diplomacy. Ukraine is home to a large amount of NGOs—over 25,000 (in 2000).⁴⁷ While many of these organizations are territorially bound and small, others are central to Ukrainian public diplomacy. The Ukrainian Peace Council (UPC) has been

⁴⁷ Vira Nanivska, "NGO Development in Ukraine," International Centre for Policy Studies (Kyiv 2001): 8, http://www.icps.com.ua/files/articles/36/71/ngo_development_eng.pdf.

internationally recognized and awarded prizes by the World Peace Council and UNESCO for its extraordinary work. The UPC has been active in many Ukrainian initiatives and

considers its activity to be an integral part of the global peace process, proclaims openness and constant readiness, on the people's diplomacy basis, for partnership and participation in various forms and structures of international cooperation, in accordance with the policies pursued by the UNO, UNESCO and other non-governmental organizations, national peace movements and foundations.⁴⁸

The Council has headed various domestic and international programs for development. One UPC program that has been important for Ukrainian public diplomacy is the Children's Educational Exchange program, which has gained international prestige and worked to build lasting relationships between Ukrainians and other populations.⁴⁹

Non-governmental public diplomacy encompass more than just official NGOs, it includes individuals who act as unofficial ambassadors for Ukraine in the international sphere. Reality television has been essential in creating international figures to enhance Ukraine's popular image abroad. For example, in Ukraine's first season of "Ukraine's Got Talent," Sand Artist (and winner) Kseniya Simonova became an international internet and media hit. The Youtube.com video of her sand art has gone viral, with over 18 million viewers, and the international news media, including the United Kingdom's *The Telegraph*, have praised her ability to touch the audience and her amazing talents.⁵⁰ Another reality television sensation, Ukrainian singer Ruslana, won "Eurovision-2004," with her mixture of Carpathian folk tunes and modern pop music. She is now performing internationally. Ukraine has been highly effective in utilizing celebrity diplomacy to better its international image. The expansion of social media, the internet and television have been of great importance in this sphere. While these are not official public

⁴⁸ "Ukrainian Peace Council," accessed April 10, 2011, <http://www.peacecouncil.org.ua/engl/index.html>.

⁴⁹ "Ukrainian Peace Council," accessed April 10, 2011, <http://www.peacecouncil.org.ua/engl/diyalnist.html>.

⁵⁰ Ian Johnston, "Sand artist Kseniya Simonova, winner of Ukraine's Got Talent, becomes internet hit," *The Telegraph*, September 19, 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopping/howaboutthat/6208721/Sand-artist-Kseniya-Simonova-winner-of-Ukraines-Got-Talent-becomes-internet-hit.html>.

diplomacy efforts by the government, they are not any less important for Ukraine's relations abroad and creating a positive image of Ukraine amongst international populations.

Conclusion

Ukrainian public diplomacy is not merely done by the government. It includes various actors and is enacted in numerous forms, including tourism diplomacy, foreign actor diplomacy and non-governmental actor diplomacy. The Ukrainian situation demonstrates that public diplomacy does not fall into an easily defined framework, but must be analyzed and understood in its various forms. Formal Ukrainian public diplomacy efforts will continue to be of extreme importance for the future of Ukrainian relations with the EU; particularly, Ukraine needs to enhance its official public diplomacy organization to better project to Europe the realities of the current Ukrainian state. The case study of Ukraine demonstrates the vitality of a strong public diplomacy apparatus for transition states, as Ukraine has taken huge steps in recent years in relating better to Europe as a whole, and now, within a year it will be holding the European Football Championship. The Ukrainian case demonstrates the importance of government collaboration with various actors to create an effective, positive image abroad. For Ukraine and other transition states a positive external image is vital for their future in the global sphere.

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