



Cultural Diplomacy as a Soft Power tool in the 21st century.  
Case study of Poland, Ukraine, and Russia

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May 2020

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Kalliopi (Ilya) Chainoglou, for her help and support during my research. Her academic expertise and knowledge in the respected fields, as well as her warm and encouraging attitudes throughout my postgraduate experience, helped me to move forward with my research. I am very grateful for her feedback on my work, her ideas and suggestions that guided me in my studies, and for the personal engagement with which she supervised my academic growth during this master's degree programme. I would like to thank my parents and my friends, who have especially supported and inspired me in many different ways during the past three years.

### **ABSTRACT**

Cultural diplomacy is a soft power tool and an element of public diplomacy, associated with a presentation and promotion of a country's culture abroad in order to build long-term relationships with publics overseas, thus creating an enabling environment for such a country in international affairs. Since there is a lack of comprehensive academic research exploring conduct of cultural diplomacy in the Eastern European countries, this paper aims to present the notion and practical application of cultural diplomacy as a tool of non-coercive or soft power in Poland, Ukraine, and Russia, utilizing such data collection methods as literature review and case study. While being principally similar in the structure of the legislative frameworks and usage of particular types of cultural diplomacy instruments, the three countries have different approaches when it comes to the definition of the basic terms used by the practitioners and academia, key narratives and messages being transmitted to the foreign publics, structure of the cultural diplomacy actors in terms of the inclusion of the non-governmental organizations and willingness of the state authorities to cooperate with foreign cultural institutions. Whether Polish, Ukrainian or Russian cultural diplomacy model is more efficient over the two others remains to be explored in further research, however the study of the cases in this dissertation shows an ability of each to deliver positive results when applied according to the specific political context of the bilateral relations.

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In the 21st century the world faces a great number of challenges of both man-made and natural character that require prompt and efficient responses from the international system. Culture on its own has a great value to forge resilient societies and increase the sense of community within them. In addition, efficient cooperation between states, international organisations, civil society, and individuals, in the current complex and uncertain environments, to a great extent depends on the level of mutual understanding and awareness about the cultural backgrounds of the actors of international relations. In this regard, cultural diplomacy comes as an important tool to achieve balanced and mutually beneficial relations between the states. According to the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, the latter is defined as a soft power tool, which comprises all the actions that are built on and resort to the exchange of information, ideas, values, traditions, art and other aspects of culture among states and their citizens to strengthen relations, enhance social and cultural cooperation, promote national interests, and build a positive image of such states in the global perspective<sup>1</sup>.

Until the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, the research embracing soft power issues was conducted mainly by the representatives of the Western school of thought, consequently focusing mostly on the countries-champions in this domain, such as the US, UK, France, Germany etc. As a result, as of the present moment, there is a lack of comprehensive academic studies exploring conduct of cultural diplomacy in the Eastern European countries. This paper will aim to present the notion and practical application of cultural diplomacy as a tool of non-coercive or soft power in Poland, Ukraine, and Russia. Namely, it will focus on the analysis of the three models of cultural diplomacy in order to see the similar and distinctive features of each. The objective of this study is to understand how three neighbouring countries, which shared a common history in the past and opted for different strategic paths in the present, use such a primary resource of their soft power as culture nowadays.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en\\_culturaldiplomacy](http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en_culturaldiplomacy)

The dissertation will be arranged in three main parts. The first will start with a detailed overview of the emergence and evolution of the key concepts, such as the ones of soft power, public diplomacy, and cultural diplomacy, presenting the approaches of the Western school, as well as stances taken by practitioners and academia in Poland, Ukraine, and Russian Federation. Second part will describe the cultural diplomacy model in each country, one by one, via analysis of each particular legislative framework and the structure of cultural diplomacy actors. This part of the paper will also present an attempt to measure the efficiency of culture in terms of its soft power. Finally, the third part will be devoted to the study of practical application of each of three cultural diplomacy models. In a format of the case study, the paper will discuss political context preceding the cultural events, cultural diplomacy actors involved, specific cultural diplomacy instruments applied, as well as impact of the conducted events on the bilateral relations between the target countries and Poland, Ukraine, Russia, respectively. The concluding part will provide an overview of the key findings of this research.

### **Methodology**

In line with the conventional approach used in the domain of social sciences, this study will be conducted using the qualitative methods of research. Yet, the specific character of the research question (analysis of the notion and practical application of cultural diplomacy in Poland, Ukraine, and Russia) embraces both theoretical and practical issues. However, due to the limitations in the availability of the data collection methods, the paper will be built around the analysis of the existing data, utilizing qualitative methods of research approaches.

Literature review, comprising the first part of the paper, will explore various sources on the topic of the study available in at least one of four languages (English, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish): books, academic articles, internet publications, legislative acts, reports, press releases etc. Date range criteria of 10 years will be applied in order to select the latest sources, with an exception of



those books and articles referring to the historical aspects of the soft power, public and cultural diplomacy notions.

Second part of this paper, which, apart of the literature review on the relevant legislative frameworks and cultural diplomacy actors, will make an attempt to assess the soft power of each of the three states in scope through the lens of culture, will use the data from the set of reports comprising one of the major studies performed up to date on the question of soft power ('Soft Power 30' global rankings of 2015-2019), statistical data of the governments, as well as public opinion surveys conducted by national and international NGOs and think tanks.

The final case study part will be based on the information gathered and analysed in the previous two major chapters. Three models of cultural diplomacy will be presented 'in action', looking in detail on the celebration of centenary of diplomatic relations between Poland and Japan, bilateral cultural year of Ukraine and Austria, and cross-year of language and literature between Russia and Greece. All the three cultural diplomacy instruments were taking place in the same year of 2019. Data for the necessary analysis of the political context of the events will be gathered from the think tanks and media reviews available online, as well as information on the cultural diplomacy actors and instruments applied will be collected from the relevant websites of the institutions and organisations involved. Social media posts will be also used as sources of information, with a selection of relevant accounts done through social media mapping tools.

## **Literature Review on Key Concepts: Soft Power, Public Diplomacy, Cultural Diplomacy**

### **Soft Power: Emergence and Evolution of the Term**

Power is one of the most important concepts of international relations theory, and a linchpin of political science. In relation to a state in the international system, power is defined as the ability of a state to exercise influence over another state/other states. Such definition assumes a possession by the former of a particular set of resources, so-called ‘sticks’ and ‘carrots’. In 1990, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., one of the founding fathers of the neoliberal school, then an Associate Dean, Professor, and Director of the Center for International Affairs at Harvard University, in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, claimed that power of a state lies not only in its military and economic resources, but in its ability to change the behavior of other states by attraction and persuasion, thus introducing the notion of *co-optive* or *soft power* (Nye, 1990). One of the most influential amongst international relations scholars, he claimed that the term ‘soft power’ actually builds on what Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz in 1962 called the "second face of power" while investigating the set of dominant values, myths, political procedures, and game rules that might privilege a particular group(s) of individuals and/or disadvantage another one(s) (Bachrach, Baratz, 1962). The research of these scholars was opposed to two different well-established approaches in the field of power studies: one of sociologists/elitists questioning “who rules?” and political scientists/pluralists examining “does anyone have power?”. Bachrach and Baratz claimed that there are two faces of power, neither of which the sociologists see and only one of which the political scientists see. Thus they envisaged a space for a new notion in political science and, in particular, international relations, the one which, in several decades from the time of their research, would be called by Joseph S. Nye ‘non-coercive’ or ‘soft’ power.

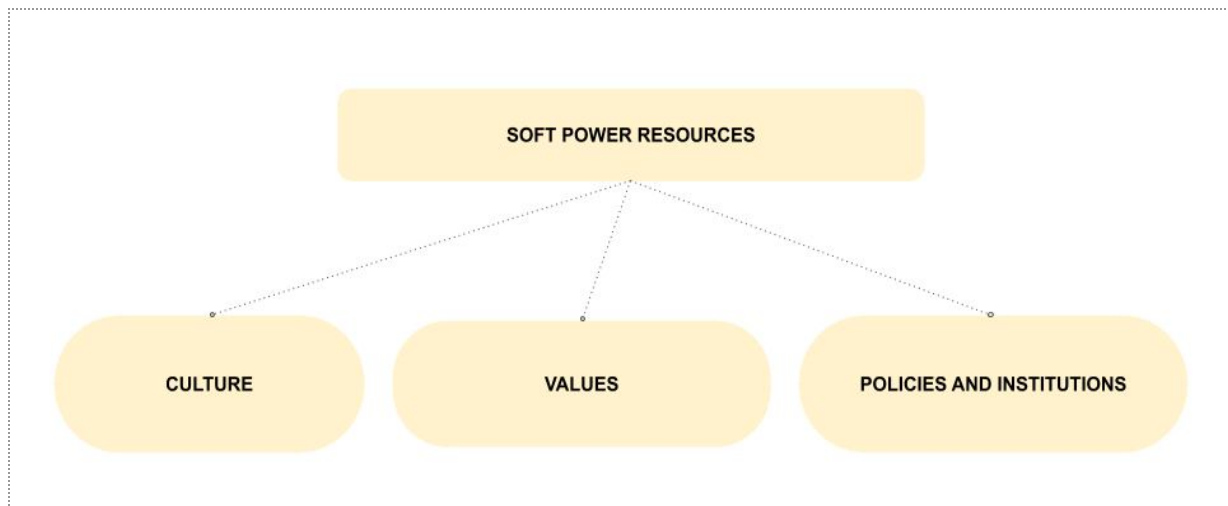
The emergence of the new concept in the last decade of the 20th century can not be fully explained without a reference to the global geopolitical situation of that period: during 1989 and 1990, the Berlin Wall came down, borders opened, and free ballots led to the collapse of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. In 1991, a set of independent republics, former Soviet states, appeared on the map: the Iron Curtain was eliminated and the Cold War ended, all with remarkable speed. The change from bipolarity to multipolarity combined with the enlargement of the group of actors in world politics were fundamental characteristics of that time. Considering the back-then existing trend for rapprochement between the former adversaries, Eastern and Western blocs, the emergence of a non-coercive, soft power approach in bilateral and multilateral relations perfectly fitted the international environment of the 1990s.

As the 21st century began, the term was further elaborated by Joseph S. Nye in his next book on this topic called *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, where Professor Nye presented the concept of smart power, an ability to combine hard and soft power and blend them into successful strategies where they reinforce each other (Nye, 2004). Later, yet acknowledging the extended time needed by a soft power to affect the behaviour of others, the author highlighted its importance in creating an enabling environment in the international relations: the more legitimate seems the power of a given state in the eyes of others, i.e. the more soft power the latter has, the less resistance to its wishes it will face (Nye, 2009). The concept was developed also in 2011 in the later book of Nye called *Future of Power*, which presented the notion of cyber power. Nye stated that ‘power depends on context, and cyber power depends on the resources that characterize the domain of cyberspace’. Recent advances in technology made massive volumes of data and knowledge highly accessible, however creating scarcity for another cyber power resource, which is crucial in the fight for a state’s credibility and attraction: attention (Nye, 2011).

Since in behavioral terms soft power is an attractive power (Nye, 2008), its assets are the resources that cultivate this attraction. The power of a state *to win hearts and minds* is generated by its **culture** (where it is attractive to others), its **values** (where they are attractive and not undermined by incompatible practices), as well as its **policies** and **institutions** (where they are seen as ‘inclusive and legitimate in the eyes of others’) (Nye, 2009). Yet, Nye clarified that soft power is not a prerogative of solely a state, acknowledging that besides the government, private sector, civil society, international organisations, and its bilateral and multilateral alliances also have soft power (Nye, 2009).

### Figure 1

*Soft power resources (Nye, 2009)*



It is important to underline that while Joseph S. Nye has been exploring various dimensions of the soft power concept for three decades since 1990, the basic definition (‘an ability to affect others and obtain preferred outcomes by attraction and persuasion rather than coercion or payment’) remained constant. In his latest article on the topic, Nye argued that in the contemporary political context the answer to the question ‘whose story wins’ rather than ‘whose

army wins' is crucial (Nye, 2019). He constantly reiterated the importance of the ability of a given country to properly communicate and explain its policies, values, and culture. Nowadays, given the abundance of information which might be spread fast and freely at any given moment of time, the success in winning 'minds' with the help of properly built narrative greatly depends on the ability to catch the attention of the target audience and, in addition, to start and maintain a dialogue with the latter. That's why the role of public diplomacy as a key soft and smart power tool in international relations is constantly growing.

### **Public Diplomacy: Definitions of Academia and Practitioners; Actors; Elements**

Though the first mention of 'public diplomacy' phrase happened as early as in 1856 in the *London Times* newspaper, in an article criticizing President of the United States it was utilized only as a synonym to 'civility in piece': "The statesmen of America must recollect that, if they have to make, as they conceive, a certain impression upon us, they have also to set an example for their own people, and there are few examples so catching as those of *public diplomacy*". In its present-day meaning, "public diplomacy" was described in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, dean of the Fletcher School at Tufts University and a distinguished foreign service officer. During his speech at the launch of an Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy, Prof. Gullion gave rather a broad definition of a term:

Public diplomacy...deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those

whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications.

As we can see, a basic assertion (premise) on which public diplomacy term is built is that people's attitudes in a given country affect the setup and implementation of the foreign policy in such a country. Thus, public diplomacy was initially defined as an activity in the field of international relations aimed to cultivate or influence public opinion in other countries that goes beyond traditional diplomacy and therefore is performed not only by governments but also private groups and media. Intercultural communications are said to be a part of public diplomacy. Similarly, Joseph S. Nye defined public diplomacy as a soft power instrument that governments use to mobilize the soft power resources (culture, values, policies) to communicate with and attract the publics of other countries, rather than solely their governments. He differentiated it from propaganda and public relations campaigns, for the former lacks credibility and the latter does not lead to long-term relationships between a given state and peoples abroad (Nye, 2008). Hence, Nye added an important characteristic of this soft power tool, saying it is aimed to establish a long-term connection with the foreign nations.

The global academic discourse does not offer a universally accepted definition of public diplomacy. It is a notion studied by representatives of various social sciences, such as political science and international relations, communications and public relations theory, cultural studies, etc. Though there is an agreement on the basic idea of 'winning hearts and minds to shape the policies abroad', there is a difference between the public diplomacy definitions of the post-Cold War era and the ones of the post-9/11 period. For H. Tuch, Emeritus Board Member of the U.S. Public Diplomacy Council, public diplomacy is a communication of a government with foreign publics aimed to bring about understanding for the national ideas, ideals, institutions, culture, national goals, and current policies (Tuch, 1990). After the September 11 attacks in 2001, a concept of new public diplomacy encompassed such terms as 'engagement', 'relationship

building’, ‘two-way communications’ (Melissen, 2005). Paul Sharp, Professor and Head of Political Science at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, defined public diplomacy as ‘the process by which direct relations are pursued with a country’s people to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented (Sharp, 2005). According to Bruce Gregory, a visiting scholar at George Washington University, public diplomacy is a term that describes ways and means by which states, associations of states, and nonstate actors understand cultures, attitudes, and behavior; build and manage relationships; and influence opinions and actions to advance their interests and values (Gregory, 2008). Manuel Castells, Professor of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Southern California, claimed that public diplomacy serves to harness the dialogue between different social collectives and their cultures to share meaning and understanding rather than aims to assert the power of a state or a social actor in the form of soft power (Castells, 2008), thus implying a close similarity with the notion of cultural relations that will be analyzed further in this paper. His colleague from the same University, Nicholas J. Cull, described public diplomacy rather differently and presented it as ‘conduct of foreign policy by engagement with foreign publics’ (Cull, 2013). Canadian professor and foreign affairs special advisor, E. H. Potter, defined public diplomacy as an effort by the government of one nation to influence public or elite opinion of the target nation in order to turn the policy of the latter to advantage (Potter, 2002). Eytan Gilboa, Professor of International Communication at the Bar-Ilan University in Israel, presented public diplomacy as an official policy translating soft power resources into action (Gilboa, 2008). In the UK, the Lord Carter’s Public Diplomacy Review, prepared on request of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2015, used a definition of public diplomacy quite similar to the one of the US scholars: ‘work aiming to inform and engage individuals and organisations overseas, in order to improve understanding of and influence for the United Kingdom in a manner consistent with governmental medium and long-term goals’ (Lord Carter, 2015). Polish political scientist, Beata Ociepka, believes public diplomacy creates or reinforces a positive image of a given entity on the international stage by influencing public opinion, fostering positive attitudes to the entity, thus

facilitating the achievement of its aims in the field of foreign policy (Ociepka, 2008). Russian public diplomacy scholar Anna Velikaya viewed this soft power instrument as a process of engaging foreign audiences through fostering cooperation in political, economic, and cultural spheres, with the purpose of promoting the country's national interests (Velikaya, 2018). Professor Leonid Huberskyi, Rector of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, defined public diplomacy as an activity of the governmental organizations to establish the international communication environment aimed to strengthen the positive perception of a state abroad, enhance understanding of the state's foreign policy, and counter the negative publicity (Huberskyi, 2004). As we can see, though scholars from various parts of the world use similar concepts to define this non-coercive power instrument, there is a lack of cohesion within the scientific community on the objectives, actors, and target audiences of the public diplomacy activities.

The mentioned viewpoints were challenged by the realist perspective, suggesting that public opinion is emotional, irrational, and/or volatile, it lacks structure and coherence and can be manipulated by the governments. From the realist perspective of political scientist Gabriel A. Almond, 'public opinion is apathetic when it should be concerned, and panicky when it should be calm' (Almond, 1956 as cited in Holsti, 2004). According to the classical realist Hans Morgenthau, neorealist John J. Mearsheimer, and diplomat-historian George F. Kennan, policymakers design foreign policy on the basis of 'national interest' and ignore the 'emotional' and 'subjective' views of the masses (Dorani, 2018). Thus, the whole underlying idea of public diplomacy stating that citizens can influence the formation of the state's policies was disputed.

In addition to the analysis conducted by the scholarly world, the public diplomacy concept is outlined by the governments. We will look closely at the respective practices in the three focus countries: Poland, Ukraine, and Russia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland defined public diplomacy as 'a set of strategic, conceptual, analytical, coordinating and



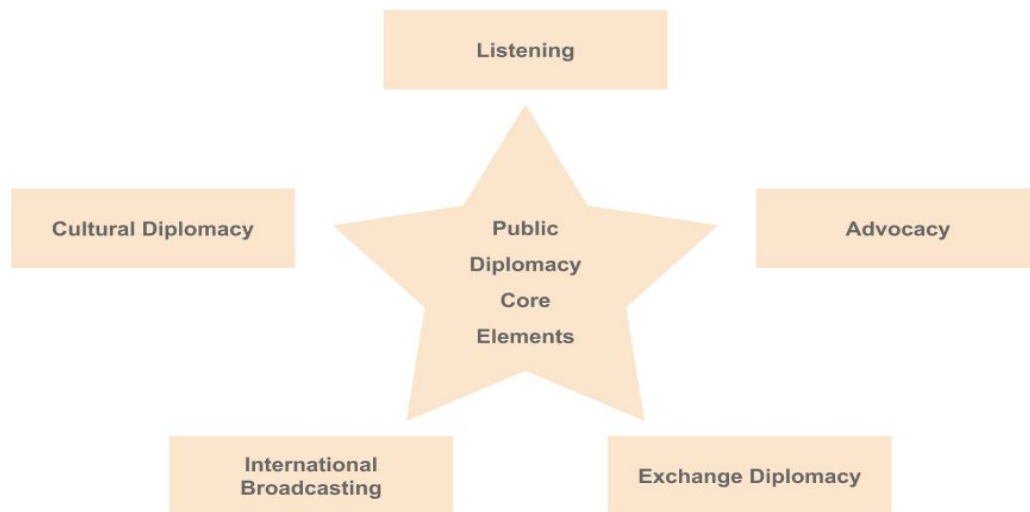
executive actions seeking to impact social attitudes and public opinion abroad and thereby to secure the principal interests of the Republic of Poland across the globe'. In the current Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, public diplomacy is mentioned as an instrument of pursuing the state's objectives in two fields. In the first case, public diplomacy is mentioned as one of the tools of international humanitarian and cultural cooperation aimed to: "build up dialogue among civilisations, achieve consensus and ensure understanding among peoples with a particular emphasis on inter-religious dialogue". The second case for Russian public diplomacy application according to its Foreign Policy Concept is informational support for foreign policy activities of the state (implying cooperation of Russian academia and experts with their foreign colleagues specializing in the field of global politics and international security). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine defines public diplomacy as a mechanism of both popularization of Ukraine and engagement with the public abroad. Again, in a like manner to the scholarship analysis of the public diplomacy definition, we may observe significant differences in these three approaches. For example, Ukrainian definition does not refer to the creation of the enabling environment for the advancement of its national interests (arguably the main purpose of public diplomacy), whereas Russian and Polish versions have clear references in this regard. Russian Federation offers a particular interpretation of the notion, mentioning humanitarian cooperation, as well as stressing on the inter-religious dialogue importance. Among various reasons for such unsynchronization in a basic definition, at least one should be highlighted, as in our mind it is relevant for all non-native English speaking countries. An absence of a precise equivalent of 'public diplomacy' (as a term) in the Russian language created several parallel notions (Dolinsky, 2012; Zonova, 2012; Klyueva & Mikhaylova, 2017) (social diplomacy, civic diplomacy, civil diplomacy, people's diplomacy, public diplomacy, and popular diplomacy, etc.), which vary in the set of actors, goals, and instruments deployed. However, the detailed analysis of such discrepancies in the 'public diplomacy' translation and interpretation goes beyond the scope of this paper.

As we discussed above, there is no coherent opinion with regard to the list of public diplomacy actors. Being a non-conventional type of diplomatic activity, public diplomacy of the 20th century developed from 'few-to-few' approach (government-to-government, common in traditional diplomacy) to few-to-many (government-to-public abroad), whereas 21st century is an era of many-to-many public diplomacy interactions (Bound, Briggs, Holden, Johns, 2007). And in the era of social media, capable of transferring any information across the globe in a matter of seconds or less, individuals and groups have the power to shift public opinion and mobilise for change. Therefore, building on an understanding of public diplomacy as a soft power tool, public diplomacy actors in the 21st century include governments, non-governmental organisations (civil society), international organisations, individual citizens, and groups of citizens.

There are five core elements of public diplomacy, which are suggested by Professor Cull based on the type of engagement with people abroad (Cull, 2008). The author of this classification admits that in spite of the relative novelty of public diplomacy as a term, its components are 'as old as statecraft itself'. The first one consists of *listening* to the foreign public and using what is learned while forming the state's policy. Second one is called '*advocacy*' and implies the process of explaining one's policies and/or viewpoints abroad. Third is titled '*exchange diplomacy*', an activity aimed to facilitate direct contact between one's own people and a foreign population. Fourth is a provision of news or '*international broadcasting*'. Here, the author points out that the broadcasting should be performed according to the 'accepted mores of international journalism'.

**Figure 2**

*Five core elements of public diplomacy (Cull, 2008)*



Finally, *cultural diplomacy* is named among the five core elements as well, and is seen as ‘an engagement with a foreign public by facilitating the export of one’s culture’. Here we may recall two points. First, culture is one of the principal sources of soft power. Second, public diplomacy is a key instrument of soft power. While practicing cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy actors engage with foreign publics via exporting culture, a principal resource of soft power. Hence, cultural diplomacy is an instrument or tool of soft power as well. In this regard, we may also refer to the State Department's report on cultural diplomacy, which called the latter a cornerstone of public diplomacy ‘for it is in cultural activities that a nation’s idea of itself is best represented’ (US Department of State, 2005). National idea, in its turn, embodies values and policies of a given state, two other primary resources of soft power. Hence, cultural diplomacy *per se* is an essential part of public diplomacy and one of the key tools for ‘winning hearts and minds’.

### **Cultural Diplomacy as a Soft Power Tool**

In the foreign policy domain, so often dominated by realpolitik thinking, culture and cultural exchange are often regarded as being desirable, but not essential. A common view is that, while cultural diplomacy can help establish and support working relationships between countries, it is strictly subordinate to the ‘hard power’ elements (military, economic capability, etc) (Bound, Briggs, Holden, Johns, 2007). However, in the interconnected world of the 21st century, culture should not be subordinate to politics. Instead, culture should be perceived as providing the operating context for politics (Bound, Briggs, Holden, Johns, 2007). This being said, it is crucial to understand that the benefits of culture will not be fully realised as soft power assets unless there is a much stronger and coherent structure for coordinating the activities that contribute to cultural diplomacy (Bound, Briggs, Holden, Johns, 2007) and ultimately support the foreign policy. From our point of view, the mentioned structure could be defined by describing cultural diplomacy resources, instruments, and institutional actors.

#### ***Emergence of the Term: Western School of Thought***

We already have learned that culture is one of the soft power sources. Still, culture is a broad term, and for the purpose of this paper, it is important to clarify its basic meaning. Raymond Williams, in his ‘Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society’ established a definition of culture as 1) civilisation, 2) signifying or symbolic system, and 3) way of life, in the anthropological sense (Williams, 1976: 87-93). Joseph S. Nye views culture with a more generalist lens, as ‘a set of practices that create meaning for a society’ (Nye, 2008). Yet, from the reciprocal gifts of kings to modern international fairs, culture has been used as a way for leaders and countries to show who they are, assert their power, and build lasting relationships (Bound,

Briggs, Holden, Johns, 2007). In the domain of international relations mutual understanding is a pre-condition for such long-term relationships. In this regard, James William Fulbright, American senator and founder of the well-known international exchange program, argued that ‘having people understand your thought is much greater security than another submarine’, hence stressing the importance of soft over hard power. And, it is the creative expression that has the necessary capacity ‘to move and persuade audiences, to shape and reveal identities, to increase understanding and respect between disparate cultures and peoples’ (Scneider, 2010). Thus, the importance of culture as a soft power asset should not be underestimated.

As we mentioned before, cultural diplomacy was practiced since ancient times: historically, cultural diplomacy has meant a country's policy to facilitate the export of examples of its culture (Cull, 2008). An institutional approach to cultural diplomacy was adopted by the European states only in the second half of the 19th century. France was a pioneer in this sense when the first ‘Alliance Française’ (an organisation for the promotion of French language) opened its doors in 1883. Across the Atlantic ocean, the U.S. Department of State started using the term ‘cultural diplomacy’ in 1959. That year, Robert H. Thayer, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for the Coordination of International Educational and Cultural Relations, delivered his speech at the University of Maine and portrayed the term like this:

Foreign relationships are no longer relationships between government, or heads of state—foreign relationships are the relationship between people of all countries—and relationships between peoples are governed by the way people think and live, and eat, and feel and this represents the culture of a people; and so today we have in the forefront of the implementation of our foreign policy, CULTURAL DIPLOMACY, and to my

mind the most important means of bringing complete mutual understanding between peoples, which in turns compels mutual understanding between governments. ...

(Thayer, 1959, as cited in Brown, 2016)

As we can see, likewise two terms analysed before (soft power and public diplomacy), the one of cultural diplomacy was also formulated in the USA, though the latter was mentioned six years before the widely cited speech of Edmund Gullion on public diplomacy. This might question the modern understanding of cultural diplomacy as a structural part of public diplomacy. It is evident that the present-day confusion between the two terms was also relevant six decades ago. Both Thayer and Gullion refer to the non-traditional diplomacy, relations beyond government-to-government format, and intercultural communications. Still, the definition of 1959 does not have an explicit reference to the final aim of ‘public opinion cultivation’, which we find in a more elaborated concept of public diplomacy revealed in 1965. The Department’s representative then limited the objective of the American cultural diplomacy to creation ‘in the peoples of the world a perfect understanding of the life and culture of America’ (Thayer, 1959, as cited in Brown, 2016).

A year after Thayer’s speech, Frederick C. Barghoorn published a study titled ‘The Soviet Cultural Offensive: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy’. The record of the Library of Congress confirms that this was the first academic study to employ the “cultural diplomacy” term (Brown, 2016). Soviet Cultural Diplomacy was defined by the author as ‘a perversion of cultural exchange and intercultural communication’ (Barghoorn, 1960). On the one hand, this publication portrays the approach of the communist countries rather as a negative phenomenon, on the other hand, practically it confirms the existence of a particular cultural diplomacy model behind the Iron Curtain. It is important to acknowledge this considering that the three countries in the scope of this study once belonged to the Eastern Bloc. Additional evidence from the U.S. suggests that cultural diplomacy as a term had been used even before

1959 in four newspaper articles, with the most prominent of them being the one of 1954 titled “Cultural Diplomacy: An Art We Neglect” by Aline B. Louchheim, in which she suggests that cultural diplomacy of the United States might be a way to ‘turn reluctant and uneasy military allies into friends’ by gaining the respect of the latter for the contemporary culture of the U.S. She also claims the importance of the reciprocal approach as ‘we can never do this [turn uneasy allies into friends] if we are officially indifferent to their cultural efforts’ (as cited in Brown, 2016).

Historically, there are negative views of cultural diplomacy due to its connotations with colonialism, imperialism and propaganda, and the unethical and immoral practices associated with such activity (Nisbet, 2013). The EU Council proposed a Strategy of Cultural Relations<sup>2</sup> in 2016 instead of cultural diplomacy to avoid the idea of “cultural imperialism” traditionally associated with the latter (Filevska, 2019). Similarly, major European cultural institutions, such as British Council and Goethe-Institute, usually employ the term ‘cultural relations’. On the contrary, Kevin Mulcahy asserts that cultural diplomacy aims to develop a mutual understanding and, at the same time, combat ethnocentrism and stereotyping (Mulcahy, 1999). He distinguishes cultural diplomacy from propaganda, as the former has rather an indirect character, i.e. it gives an opportunity for a foreign nation to experience the culture of a given state and decide for themselves if they like it or not. Mark Leonard, in his turn, believes that countries can move beyond propaganda in both public and cultural diplomacy through understanding their target audience; confronting any hostility in the target audience towards the state; engaging people emotionally; and proving their relevance to the target audience (Leonard, 2002). Some scholars (see, for example, Feigenbaum, 2001 as cited in Cull, 2008) present cultural diplomacy as an autonomous soft power tool, and not a structural part of public diplomacy, as they restrict the use of the latter solely to advocacy activities.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policies/strategic-framework/strategy-international-cultural-relations\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policies/strategic-framework/strategy-international-cultural-relations_en)

Though being actively practiced in the post-WW2 period, cultural diplomacy as a notion entered common parlance only after the end of the Cold War. Modern scholarship often refers to the definition authored by Professor Milton C. Cummings, the distinguished scholar of American politics at the Johns Hopkins University, who said that ‘cultural diplomacy is associated with an exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding’ (Cummings, 2003). Despite being popular, this definition does not cover the reasons behind the need for such mutual understanding and dialogue between the nations, thus missing a link to the foreign policy. As we may remember from the previous chapter, Nicholas Cull defined cultural diplomacy as an element of public diplomacy and ‘an actor's attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad’ (Cull, 2008). Joseph Nye in his speech delivered at the Cultural Diplomacy Symposium in New York asserted that cultural diplomacy is a soft power tool and its efficacy depends upon understanding of the minds of the others (Nye, 2009). The latter statement leads us to the conclusion that a comprehensive intercultural dialogue is a prerequisite for successful cultural diplomacy. Overall, we may define cultural diplomacy as a soft power tool and an element of public diplomacy, which is associated with a presentation and promotion of a nation’s culture abroad aimed at creating an enabling environment for such a nation in international affairs.

### *Notions of Cultural Diplomacy in Poland, Ukraine, and Russia*

Until recently cultural diplomacy as a term was relatively not used in Polish academic literature and governmental documents. During the 1990s, the role of Polish culture in international relations was primarily seen through the lens of a cultural and not a foreign policy. In the beginning of the 21st century, Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski, who served as a Minister of Culture and National Heritage in 2000-2001 and 2005-2007, named cultural diplomacy an element of foreign policy (as cited in Ryniejska-Kiełdanowicz, 2009). According to him, the



country's cultural and intellectual achievements assist in the foreign policy implementation. Subsequently, as a notion of public diplomacy entered the national discourse, cultural diplomacy was as well recognised as an important part of Polish public diplomacy (Ociepka, Ryniejska-Kiełdanowicz, 2005). Thus, the aim of Polish cultural diplomacy is to support realisation of Polish foreign policy strategic objectives by promoting its culture in the world (Jurkiewicz-Eckert, 2014). Marta Ryniejska – Kiełdanowicz (2009) points out the strong emphasis on a historical aspect as one of the distinctive features of Polish cultural diplomacy.

Similarly to the public diplomacy term analysed above, in Russia, 'cultural diplomacy' is considered to be a borrowed concept from the Western scholarship, as per se both are not 'customary terms of national political thought' (Sergunin, Karabeshkin 2015). There is also another term titled 'humanitarian cooperation' used by Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to refer to the activities surrounding both public and cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is seen as a sub-type of public diplomacy (PICREADI, 2018) and a means to re-establish the country's image in international relations (Feklyunina, 2008). However, Russian scholars Klyueva and Mikhaylova (2017) point out the transformation of the goals from quite traditional in this field 'promo of the language, culture and preserving cultural heritage' (MID, 2010), into fostering 'pro-Russian identity' beyond the borders of the country, where language, culture, diaspora, and compatriots living abroad became key elements of Russian cultural diplomacy efforts.

There is no unified view on cultural diplomacy also among Ukrainian scholars and practitioners. For example, Olena Kuchmiy and Mykola Ozhevan gave triple definitions to cultural diplomacy. According to them, it is, firstly, a foreign cultural policy (culture policy), aimed at preserving national culture, advocating national cultural identity in international cooperation. Secondly, it is a consideration of cultural factors in diplomatic activities in order to achieve inter-state agreements by overcoming cultural barriers. Finally, cultural diplomacy is the use of various factors, culture, art and education to protect and promote internationally the national interests

(Kuchmiy, Ozhevan, as cited in Ukrainian Diplomatic Encyclopedia, 2004). As we can see, the first out of three definitions differs from the Western scholarship discourse, as not only it creates discrepancy by putting cultural diplomacy in the field of both foreign and cultural policy, but also it recalls the notion of the national identity, which we have not observed in the definitions assigned by western school of thought. Ukrainian scholar and diplomat, Oksana Rozumna, defines cultural diplomacy as a set of practices, methods and activities developed and implemented by the state external affairs institutions and/or other authorised public authorities responsible for the support of the diplomatic activity of the state via the transmission of the national culture to the foreign audiences (Rozumna, 2016). Thus, the author limits the number of cultural diplomacy actors only to public bodies, excluding efforts of NGOs and individual citizens. Volodymyr Sheiko, Director General of Ukrainian Institute, representing the side of cultural diplomacy practitioners, defined the term as one of the foreign policy instruments aimed at the promotion and protection of the national interests of the state. He also referred to a situation, in which a small-sized state fights external threats, naming cultural diplomacy as a way to be a subject and not an object in world politics; a method to protect the informational independence, as well as generate the country's own narrative regarding its history and culture (Shevchenko, 2019). Danylo Lubkivskyi, former Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister of Ukraine, explained cultural diplomacy through the lens of the emotional contact with foreign audiences established via the act of culture. He believes that cultural diplomacy is based on the understanding of the national identity which strives to present itself on the international arena. Through this understanding cultural diplomacy could achieve its objectives in the inter-state relations, which, according to Lubkivskyi, are divided into three parts: defining Ukraine on a 'cultural map'<sup>3</sup> of the foreign nation; establishment of the two-way dialogue bringing up

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<sup>3</sup> Here the author might refer to the concept of 'culture map' offered by political scientists Ronald Inglehart of the University of Michigan and Christian Welzel of Leuphana University in Germany. Their idea is based on the World Values Survey (WVS), the largest cross-national investigation of human beliefs and values, which was started in 1981. Ukraine, together with Moldova, Ireland, Belgium, and Latvia, was included in the latest, seventh, wave of WVS research (to be finished in 2020).

common interests; sharing of universally recognised values that reflect common ethical principles (Lubkivskyi, 2019). He sets the main task of cultural diplomacy as ‘a full representation of the cultural image of a state and a nation, its approximation to the foreign cultural environment, and the establishment of the emotional connection between foreign and national cultural environments’. This task is seen by the author as an indispensable part of a state policy in terms of the national security and promotion of the national interests. Hence, we can see that Ukrainian scholars and practitioners, in addition to the common understanding of cultural diplomacy (use of culture aimed to advance state’s policies and promote national interests), present cultural diplomacy from the perspectives of national identity and security. The claim that cultural diplomacy is a soft power tool is confirmed by the references made by Ukrainian scholarship and professionals to the function of initiating the emotional contact with foreign publics assigned to cultural diplomacy, with the latter being viewed as an essential part of state policy.

### ***Resources, Instruments, Actors of Cultural Diplomacy***

Cultural diplomacy as a soft power tool employs culture, primarily a soft power asset, as its resource. More specifically, from our point of view, resources of cultural diplomacy are derived from the cultural industries, which produce and distribute cultural goods or services<sup>4</sup>. According to UNESCO, the former are consumer goods that convey ideas, symbols and ways of life, i.e. books, magazines, multimedia products, software, recordings, films, videos, audio-visual programmes, crafts and fashion; whereas the latter are represented by audio-visual distribution activities, promotion of performing arts and cultural events, as well as cultural information services and the preservation of books, recordings and artefacts. Being a cultural projection in a nutshell, cultural diplomacy employs both high and low culture (Terry, 2018).

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<sup>4</sup> <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary>

There are five cultural diplomacy instruments or tools as they were defined in the Culture & Creativity course<sup>5</sup> on cultural relations and cultural diplomacy: mobility for actors of culture (cultural exchange or residency programs); cultural events (exhibitions, concerts, festivals, conferences and long-term celebrations); bilateral years of culture; exchange of expertise (technical assistance and capacity building; establishment of cultural institutes, e.g. British Council, French Institute etc); promotion of language, certain cultural practices or art forms; negotiations regarding difficult or conflict areas, i.e. repatriation or quotas (Filevska, 2019). Here we can make an interesting observation: an act of establishment of a cultural institute is an instrument of cultural diplomacy, whereas a cultural institute *per se*, nevertheless its legal framework, is an actor of cultural diplomacy, as we will define the latter term below.

Early 21st century witnessed a scholar debate over the question of cultural diplomacy actors, which mainly surrounds the issue of the legitimacy of non-state actors involvement, as in the past, cultural diplomacy activities were conducted and coordinated ‘exclusively around the state’ (Jora 2013). Anheier and Isar stated that “government agents” and envoys engaged in the practice of “cultural policy on display” are the primary actors of cultural diplomacy (Anheier and Isar 2007). Such approach to the latter was called ‘statist perspective’ as it was based on structures of traditional diplomacy, such as ministries of foreign affairs and embassies (Hocking et al. 2012). However, globalisation and the era of information revolution both led to a rise of non-state actors in this domain (as cited in Grincheva, 2015: Potter 2002; Nye 2004; Melissen 2005; Kleiner 2008; Tallberg and Jönsson 2010; Hocking et al. 2012). As Nye (2004) argued, actors of diplomacy that are likely to be more attractive in postmodern international relations are those whose cultures and ideas are presented as more aligned to prevailing international norms, which reinforces the credibility of their actions. In 2008, Nye also mentioned the scepticism of the postmodern societies in relation to governments, thus emergence

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<sup>5</sup> The Culture and Creativity is the EU-funded programme aiming to promote cultural contribution to the social and economic development of the six Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

and the increasing role of the non-state actors in international relations could be called a characteristic of the 21st century.

Non-state actors are “non-sovereign entities that exercise significant economic, political, or social power and influence on the national or international levels” (La Porte 2012), such as non-governmental organisations, organised civil society, transnational corporations, and terrorist organisations (Spiro 2013). Based on the criteria of the legal institutional framework, there are three types of non-state actors: public-interest-oriented NGOs, profit-oriented corporate actors, and public inter-governmental organisations (Arts et al. 2001). The first one, a public-interest-oriented organisation or NGO, is a legal entity established for social, religious, charitable, educational, athletic, literary, cultural, or other purposes other than making profits; it uses its surplus revenues to further achieve its goals (Hopkins 2009). A profit-oriented corporation is a business enterprise owned by shareholders and managed by a board of directors (Hopkins 2009). Inter-governmental organisations are institutions, founded and financially supported by nation-states; they are public in their forms and purposes (Arts et al. 2001). Despite all of the limitations and restrictions that define the relations between non-state actors and governments in their activities within and beyond their countries, many scholars argue that non-state actors “significantly influence [governments’] foreign policy behavior” by communicating directly with foreign audiences, thus having an impact on global public opinion (Ataman 2003).

In the domain of cultural diplomacy, a non-state actor is a non-governmental organization that is able to exercise powerful social or cultural influence at the national and international levels (Grincheva, 2015). The mentioned influence is accumulated by such an actor via constant development of its expertise or reputation; effective resource and alliance building with a diverse body of international constituents; nurturing its credibility through its autonomous standing outside of the direct control of a national government; strong transnational commitment to

serve global publics. Examples of such non-state actors include non-profit cultural organizations, community groups of artists, international cultural foundations, and diaspora associations (Grincheva, 2015). These organizations have assumed roles previously taken exclusively by states, such as organizing exchange programs, traveling exhibitions and performances in different countries, or promoting arts and culture among foreign audiences (as cited in Grincheva, 2015; Snow 2009; Van Ham 2010; Laos 2011; Gienow-Hecht and Donfried 2013). Hence, we can conclude that cultural diplomacy actors include both state and non-state organisations. Though, from our point of view, the former include not only traditional diplomacy structures, such as foreign ministries and diplomatic posts, but also all the state bodies involved in the cultural activities within the state (for example, ministries of culture, their subordinates and affiliated institutions), provided that scope of their responsibilities include an international relations aspect. Non-state actors of cultural diplomacy (cultural foundations, cultural NGOs etc), are claimed to have more and more increasing roles in the postmodern era.

### *Cultural Diplomacy vs. Cultural Relations*

While studying cultural diplomacy, it is essential to differentiate it from the notion of cultural relations. In 2013, British Council defined the latter as the process of sharing and communication of the culture internationally, typically through education exchanges, language teaching, art performances or museum exhibitions, international broadcasting and a wide variety of other activities (Influence and attraction, 2013). This definition gives space for the confusion between two terms in question. Cultural diplomacy and cultural relations are very close semantically, they are so-called 'sibling concepts', however they do possess significant differences when it comes to analyzing the aims pursued by the practitioners of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations. In early 2018, British Council and Goethe-Institut defined cultural relations as follows:

Cultural relations are understood as reciprocal transnational interactions between two or more cultures, encompassing a range of activities conducted by state and/or non-state actors within the space of culture and civil society. The overall outcomes of cultural relations are greater connectivity, better mutual understanding, more and deeper relationships, mutually beneficial transactions and enhanced sustainable dialogue between people and cultures, shaped through engagement and attraction rather than coercion (British Council, Goethe-Institut, 2018).

The study claims that the difference between the notions of cultural relations, soft power, public and cultural diplomacy is characterized by the contradiction of intrinsic versus instrumental value of culture, though the latter is put in the center of all of these terms: ‘Cultural relations practitioners aspire to genuine reciprocity and mutual understanding, while cultural and public diplomacy, and soft power, sometimes bear connotations of instrumentalism and self-interest’ (British Council, Goethe-Institut, 2018). Moreover, as opposed to the reciprocal approach used by cultural relations practitioners, Milton C. Cummings (2009) writes, cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy ‘can ... be more of a one-way street than a two-way exchange, as when one nation concentrates its efforts on promoting the national language, explaining its policies and point of view, or “telling its story” to the rest of the world’. Also, it is the involvement or non-involvement of the government that distinguish cultural relations from any of the soft power tools, as cultural relations per se might be created and maintained without direct intervention of a state and not in support of/in connection to a particular foreign policy of the latter, e.g. by independent private foundations, civil society organizations, active citizens etc. In this context, the former American diplomat Richard Arndt made the necessary distinction between cultural relations that ‘grow naturally and organically, without government intervention’ and ‘cultural diplomacy [that] can only be said to take place when formal diplomats, serving national governments, try to shape and channel this natural flow to advance national interests’

(as cited in Ang, Raj Isar, Mar, 2015: Arndt 2006, p. xviii). This view on the cultural diplomacy practices could be challenged by the “father” of the soft power notion, Joseph S. Nye, who noticed that postmodern societies tend to be sceptical to any form of authority, thus governments are less and less trusted (Nye, 2008), and in the context of cultural diplomacy strategic planning, it’s only the efficient cooperation with the private sectors and NGOs that might make this and any type of public diplomacy successful in shaping the public opinion of a third country. Also Bound, Briggs, Holden, and Johns admit the importance of the informal engagement created by the cultural settings for the diplomatic objectives perceived by the government officials (Bound, Briggs, Holden, Johns, 2007). Hence, despite the existing similarities between two terms, we can assume that cultural relations and cultural diplomacy could not be viewed as substitutes, as they differ in their ultimate goals (mutual understanding vs. self interest), ways culture is valued (intrinsic vs. instrumental), actors involved and the character of the relations (reciprocity vs. unidirectionality).

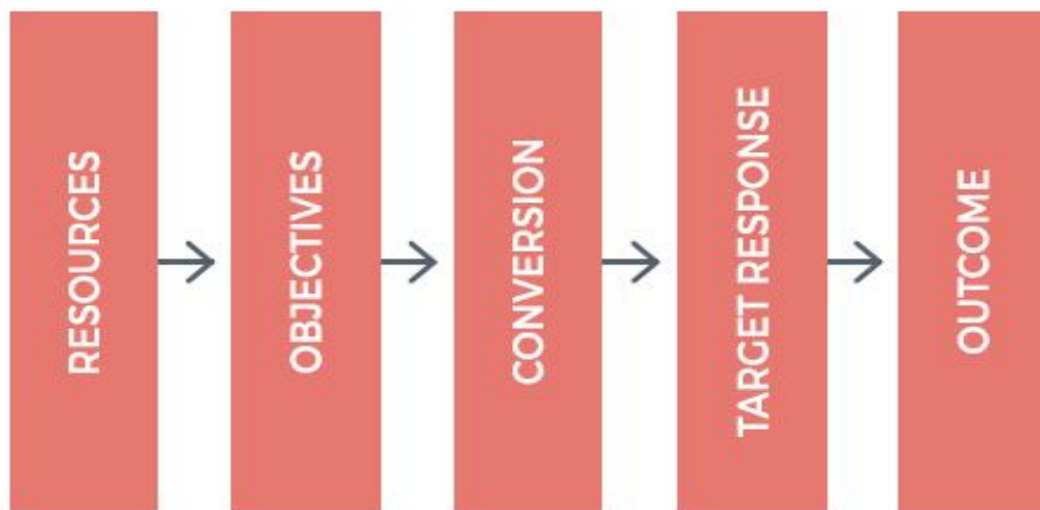
### ***Measuring Efficiency of Culture as a Soft Power Resource***

The difficulty of measuring the non coercive power has been acknowledged both by academic and practitioners, since solving this issue would answer one of the key questions on soft power: how a given state might make use of it? Joseph S. Nye believed that *polls or focus groups* could measure and define a particular asset as an attractive soft power resource (Nye, 2008). In 2011, he offered the scheme of soft power conversion process, which included six stages called ‘resources’, ‘objectives’, ‘conversion’, ‘target response’, and ‘outcome’. Clearly, the first issue to solve in order to convert the resources into outcomes is to understand how these resources (culture, political values, and foreign policy) could be assessed and compared with others globally.



**Figure 3**

*Soft Power Conversion Process (Nye, 2011)*



In 2015, the first “Soft Power 30” report<sup>6</sup> was done, presenting a global ranking of thirty countries in the world, with the first place being assigned to the global Soft Power leader. This publication was called ‘the clearest picture to date of global soft power’ by Joseph S. Nye, an academic ‘father’ of the term. The Soft Power 30 assesses each country of the report against a set of objective (metrics) and subjective (international polling run in 25 countries across every region of the world) data. There are six sub-indices of the objective data: ‘enterprise’ (attractiveness of the economic model), ‘culture’ (global appeal of a nation’s cultural outputs), ‘digital’ (includes efficiency of digital diplomacy), ‘government’ (extent to which the

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<sup>6</sup> Soft Power 30 is a project performed by Portland, a strategic communications consultancy company, in cooperation with Facebook, ComRes, and the Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California.

governance model is appealing), ‘engagement’ (strength of diplomatic network, provision of development aid), and ‘education’ (includes *inter alia* attractiveness of the country to international students). International polling includes such metrics as ‘trust to do the right thing in global affairs’, ‘appeal as a place to visit, work, or study’, and ‘contribution to global culture’. From our point of view, within six sub-indices used in the research, four partially characterise the cultural diplomacy domain. Those are, first and foremost, culture index (involves measurements of various indicators, such as: income from tourists and their total number, participation in the major film festivals, annual museum attendance, size of music market and appearance in the top 10 albums worldwide, number of UNESCO sites, number of foreign correspondents working inside the country, international sports competitions results, the influence and reach of language, quality of national air carrier, number of high-class restaurants, sports rankings, food, language), followed by education (showing *inter alia* the appeal of the country to the international youth, positions of the local universities in the global ranking, budgets spent on education), engagement (since the cultural diplomacy activities are predominantly performed or coordinated by the staff of the diplomatic posts, such as embassies, consulates or permanent missions), and digital (evaluating *inter alia* the use of social media by the state officials: though media *per se* belong to public diplomacy sphere, in the 21st century any comprehensive cultural diplomacy strategy could not afford to exclude the new media channels). The analysis of the two remaining sub-indices (government and economy) goes out of the scope of this paper, since both of them belong to the field of public diplomacy.

An alternative study on measuring the influences and effects of the soft power across political (pluralism, foreign aid), cultural (cultural institutions, global cultural rankings, people’s Internet connectivity), and social (citizen prosperity) dimensions was commissioned in 2017 by the British Council from the University of Edinburgh. Its statistical findings confirm the ability of democratic governance model, economic prosperity, and internationally networked cultural institutions to provide tangible dividends. The countries in possession of such soft power

resources and tools attract more tourists, international students, FDI, as well as positively affect UNGA voting behaviour. For example, it was found that when the number of countries a cultural institution from country X covers increases in 1%, the FDI for that country increases in almost 0.66% (British Council, University of Edinburgh, 2017). In addition, the high culture rank is the most important factor when it comes to voting in the UN General Assembly, compared even with the hard power of a state's economic strength (British Council, University of Edinburgh, 2017). Since Ukraine, one of the three states in the scope of this paper, was not included in any of the mentioned surveys on soft power assets, the further results of the Soft Power 30 and University of Edinburgh research will be analysed in the respective chapters below, based on the examples of Poland and Russian Federation. The author of this paper will try to estimate Ukraine's soft power through the lens of culture as a major source of non coercive power. The mentioned estimation will be based on the analysis of available statistical data and surveys.

## **Cultural Diplomacy Model in Poland**

### **Legislative Framework of Polish Cultural Diplomacy**

There are two principal documents that guide external policies of the Republic of Poland, including the country's approach to conduct its cultural diplomacy. The basic document which lays down the foreign policy objectives of the Republic is the Polish Foreign Policy Strategy. The Strategy is a multiannual document and the current version, which has three chapters (Security, Growth, High Standing), oversees the four-year period ranging from 2017 to 2021. Public and cultural diplomacy are mentioned in the Polish Foreign Policy Strategy in the context of challenges they face in the present period, which are described as ‘translating the key messages of Poland’s history and culture into a contemporary language that will be understood by audiences across the globe’. The second document, Polish Foreign Policy Guidelines, is prepared each year and is of a classified type. The Guidelines set the priorities of Polish diplomacy, including public and cultural diplomacy, in the ‘operational manner’. Polish Foreign Policy Strategy assigns the task of ‘explaining Polish narrative’ to foreigners to the network of Polish Institutes. Established and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Institutes actively support measures to promote Polish culture abroad taken by other Polish institutions with similar tasks and objectives, such as the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, the Polish Film Institute, the Book Institute, the Theatre Institute, and the Fryderyk Chopin Institute. In the next sub-chapter we will have a closer look at the set of cultural diplomacy actors in Poland.

### **Main Actors of Polish Cultural Diplomacy**

Cultural diplomacy activities of Poland are mainly performed by its state or state-affiliated actors, such as Department of Public and Cultural Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Polish diplomatic missions, global network of Polish Institutes, Department of International Relations at the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Adam Mickiewicz Institute,

International Centre of Culture, Polish Book Institute, Zbigniew Raszewski Theatrical Institute, Polish Film Institute, Fryderyk Chopin Institute, Institute of Music and Dance, Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange etc. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland has a specialised Department of Public and Cultural Diplomacy<sup>7</sup> that works to promote Polish culture, science, and education, and operates in pursuit of Polish foreign policy tasks. In collaboration with the Polish Institutes, embassies and consulates, this MFA unit ensures the participation of Polish authors and artists in major cultural events worldwide, thus making the Polish voice heard during key international debates on culture. In addition, it conducts negotiations on international agreements in the fields of culture, education, science, information and youth exchanges, as well as cooperates with foreign and domestic institutions, opinion makers, non-governmental organizations, and foreign media.

Polish diplomatic missions, cultural and science attachés, comprise the list of the essential state actors of the country's cultural diplomacy. With 136 diplomatic posts of various types all over the globe, Poland holds 14th place among OECD countries in 2019 Lowy Institute Global Diplomacy Ranking<sup>8</sup>. The country has quite an extensive network of 88 embassies, 36 consulates, nine permanent missions, and three other representations. However, not every foreign diplomatic post of the country is endorsed by a specialised cultural service unit, also referred to as 'Polish Institute' or 'Polish Cultural Institute'.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.pl/web/diplomacy/department-of-public-and-cultural-diplomacy>

<sup>8</sup> Lowy Global Diplomacy Institute offers a comprehensive comparison of the world's most significant diplomatic networks: [https://globaldiplomacyindex.lowyinstitute.org/country\\_rank.html](https://globaldiplomacyindex.lowyinstitute.org/country_rank.html)

**Figure 4***Cultural diplomacy actors in Poland*

The global network of Polish Institutes is a chief implementor of the state's cultural diplomacy tasks as envisaged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The mission of the Institutes is to protect Poland's good name and image by ensuring Polish participation in international projects, as well as establishing and maintaining contacts with foreign partners in the fields of culture, education, science, and history. Currently there are twenty four Institutes worldwide and their geography of operations include various countries of Europe, Russia, UK, USA, India, China, Japan, and Israel. Being run by the diplomats, Polish Institutes are per se structural parts or 'cultural service'<sup>9</sup> units of the embassies. Polish Institutes closely collaborate with the local institutions of culture, Polish diaspora organisations, media, research, development facilities and academia, including

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.culturepolonaise.eu/1,1,0,en,Home\\_page](http://www.culturepolonaise.eu/1,1,0,en,Home_page)

staff and students of Polish, Slavic and Central European studies, in the countries of presence. Thus, the typical set of the cultural diplomacy tools cover the topics of theatre, music, visual arts, literature, film, history, and include organisation of concerts, exhibitions, festivals, forums, screenings, lectures, presentations, workshops, and provision of scholarships. The narrative which Polish Institutes aim to promote, is an image of Poland as ‘a modern, internationally active state, a successful model of peaceful political and economic transformations’. Their other goal, stipulated as ‘fighting stereotypes and one-sided opinions about the country’s recent history’<sup>10</sup>, confirms the strong connection of Polish cultural diplomacy to the historical aspect.

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (hereinafter - Ministry of Culture) via its Department of International Relations supervises the application of the international cultural agreements, controls the implementation of cultural cooperation programmes, and coordinates activities of the major actor of Polish cultural diplomacy, Adam Mickiewicz Institute (AMI). The Institute is a state cultural institute organised by the Ministry of Culture<sup>11</sup>. The Institute presents Polish culture and heritage on the international scene and works towards global recognition and appreciation of the Polish culture. Though this institution is Warsaw-based, the AMI activities target mostly foreign audiences, ranging from the general public to professional representatives of cultural and creative industries, including leaders and opinion makers. Typical cultural diplomacy tools employed by the Institute include organisation of study tours and workshops, artistic and cultural events (festivals, concerts, exhibitions, conferences), production and selling of publications (articles, books) and audiovisual content (films, music). In addition, AMI runs ‘Culture.pl’, a website and a flagship brand of the Institute, which has over 6 million visitors a year across 80 countries, which presents the best of Polish literature, design, visual arts, music, and film with over 40,000 articles in Polish, English and Russian.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.polinst.kyiv.ua/eng/mission.html>

<sup>11</sup> <https://iam.pl/en/about-us/charter-of-adam-mickiewicz-institute>

The International Centre of Culture is one of the first state cultural and expert research institutions founded by the Ministry of Culture shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It is a forum where the wider public can meet and hold debates with scholars, artists, and politicians. The core ideals of the Centre evolve around intercultural communication and building a common Europe by overcoming political, ideological and religious divides. Based in Krakow, the Centre organises various events (exhibitions, public talks, presentations) and revokes such questions as: the essence of European civilisation; national stereotypes; national identity in the face of globalisation; collective memory; the multicultural character of Central Europe; Poland in Europe; cultural heritage and a new philosophy for its preservation; the place of culture in society.

The Polish Book Institute is a national cultural institution launched by the Ministry of Culture to promote Polish literature worldwide. In its cultural diplomacy scope, the Book Institute facilitates translation and publishing of the Polish literature abroad through the financial means of its own Poland Translation Programme, it cooperates with the organisers of the international literature events and promotes the participation of the Polish writers in them.

Zbigniew Raszewski Theatrical Institute is a state institution responsible for documentation and promotion of Polish theatre. The institute was founded by the Ministry of Culture. It initiates public debate on contemporary Polish theatre and supports research and educational activities in the field. The Institute runs the biggest web-portal dedicated to Polish theatre and theatrical Internet Television, as well as organises festivals, lectures, workshops, contests and study visits.

The Polish Film Institute is also a state institution accountable to the Ministry of Culture. The Institute's principal task is to support and promote the Polish film industry. The Institute's tasks, specified in the Act on Cinematography, are among others: to create conditions for the development of Polish film production and international co-production; to inspire and support the development of all types of Polish film creativity, in particular artistic films, including the



development of film projects and the production and distribution of such films; to support film debuts and the artistic development of young filmmakers; to subsidise enterprises in developing film projects, film production, distribution and dissemination of films, and in providing assistance and expert services to public administration, and to support the upkeep of film archives.

The Fryderyk Chopin Institute is a Warsaw-based, state cultural institution established by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The activities of the Institute cover the research and popularization of knowledge about Chopin's life and work through publications, concerts, conferences, courses; protection of composer's heritage; gathering of related archive materials and museum objects.

The Institute of Music and Dance (IMiT) is a state-run cultural institution established by the Ministry of Culture aimed to support the development of music and dance culture in Poland. The IMiT runs residency, artistic, research, publishing and grant programmes, as well as participates in the exchange of information and experience with international professional partners. As a cultural diplomacy actor, the Institute runs a wide range of educational activities (conferences, workshops and training), commissions research, supports and coordinates the activities of cultural institutions and non-governmental organisations, celebrates anniversaries of important events in history of dance and music.

The Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA) is a public legal person established by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Though the mission of NAWA is to foster the academic development of Poland, one of the organisation's goals is focused on such national cultural diplomacy instrument as Polish language promotion. NAWA promotes learning Polish as a foreign language, supports activities aimed at the professionalisation of teaching, maintains permanent contacts with academic centres and institutions involved in teaching Polish,

raises the prestige of the Polish language as a foreign language. The Agency supervises the provision of the state certification in Polish organized in 20 exam centres in Poland and abroad.

In recent years, an increasing role in cultural relations has been carried out by cultural institutions founded by local government administrations as well as NGOs. The latter are very active in cross-border intercultural dialogue and co-operation. For example, Warsaw-based Other Space Foundation, implements and runs innovative cultural, artistic, and social projects in the attempt to make real change in Poland and various corners of the world. Foundation carries out international and local festivals, social campaigns, monitoring, advocacy and training activities. Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs ensures a dialogue with the non-governmental sector involved in public and cultural diplomacy activities through the annual competitions held by the Ministry to find partners in shaping the positive image of the country abroad. For example, in 2012, such competition yielded several dozens of projects and the joint-projects<sup>12</sup> were implemented with the Association of Applied Graphic Designers, Association for the Assistance of Children and Youth, Polish-Czech-Slovak Solidarity Foundation, Association of the Friends of Nowica, Union of Polish Cities etc. According to the reports published on the Compendium<sup>13</sup>, an online platform for the in-depth information on cultural policies, statistics and trends, foreign cultural institutes such as the British Council and the Institute Français no longer play a major role as cultural operators in Poland, although they do organise a series of cultural projects which are the outcome of co-operation with Polish private and public institutions.

Thus, cultural diplomacy in Poland is conducted by not only traditional state actors, such as foreign or cultural ministry with their affiliated institutions, but also by local public authorities and non-governmental public organisations. There are established mechanisms of cooperation and communication between the state and respective NGOs, e.g. competitions and, consequently,

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<sup>12</sup>[http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/pdf/research/books/public\\_diplomacy/Public\\_Diplomacy\\_-\\_Ministry\\_Of\\_Foreign\\_Affairs\\_Of\\_The\\_Republic\\_Of\\_Poland.pdf](http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/pdf/research/books/public_diplomacy/Public_Diplomacy_-_Ministry_Of_Foreign_Affairs_Of_The_Republic_Of_Poland.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.culturalpolicies.net/database/search-by-country/country-profile/category/?id=30&gl=1>

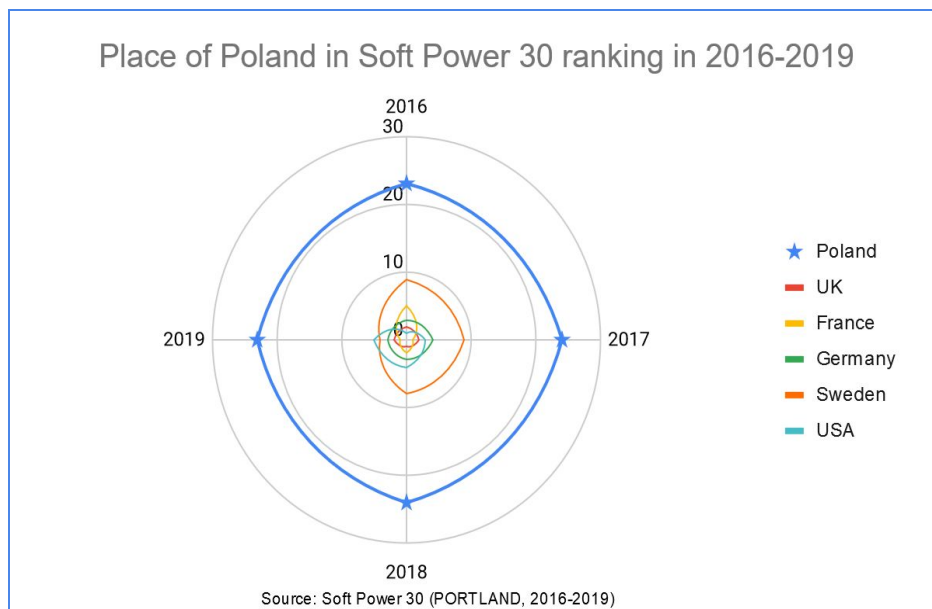
joint-projects. It is important to point out that major European international cultural organisations do not play a significant role in the field of country's cultural diplomacy.

### Measuring Polish Soft Power through the Lens of Culture

Position of Poland in the Soft Power 30 (SP 30) ranking was stable over the last four years (the country was included in the report in 2015), with an overall score balancing between 23rd and 24th place. The list of her closest 'neighbours' in the ranking was quite wide in terms of geography and economic power scale, as during 2016-2019 Poland was overrun by Portugal, Greece, and South Korea, while during the same period it was one position above Czech Republic, Hungary, China, and Brazil. The Figure 5 shows how distant Poland is as a soft power in relation to the leaders of the global ranking: UK, France, Germany, Sweden, and the US.

#### Figure 5

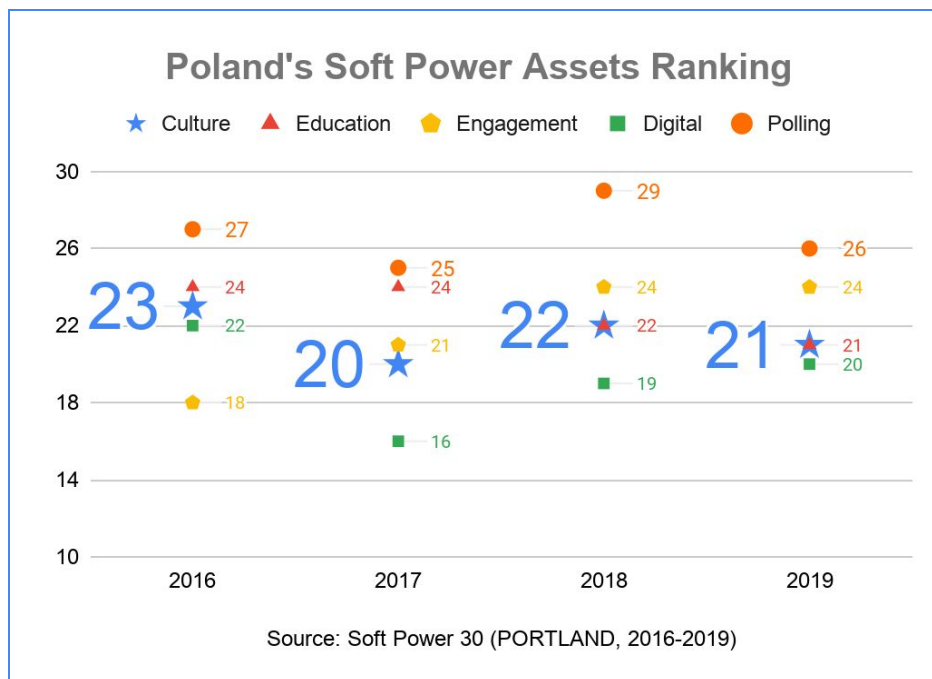
*Place of Poland in the Soft Power 30 in comparison to the soft power leaders*



When it comes to the ‘cultural diplomacy’ sub-indices of education, engagement, digital, and culture, Poland shows quite interesting dynamics. As it could be seen from the Figure 6, the highest points Rzeczpospolita Polska got for its diplomatic network and development aid efforts (ranked 18th in 2016), in two years that followed it secured its highest grades in digital infrastructure (ranked 16th in 2017 and 19th in 2018). Polish culture, though not being the strongest in the country’s soft power arsenal in 2016-2018, in 2019 progressed to the rank of 21, equaling points with the sub-index of education. It is interesting to see that according to international polling results, Poland was assessed much worse than its overall score shows.

**Figure 6**

*Poland’s soft power assets ranking*



Note: Rank 1 being the best and 30 being the worst

A sharp change in the perception of Poland could be observed in 2018, when the country lost four points in respective ranking (see Figure 6). The major events of that period included street

protests against the ruling Law and Justice party over the controversial judiciary reform, the subsequent reshuffle of the government, passing of the so-called Holocaust Law, a defamation law which criminalized references to Poland's involvement in the catastrophe of WW2. Thus, we can assume an existence of a link between the political developments happening within the country and its perception by the foreign publics, eventually devaluating application of any soft power tool, including cultural diplomacy.

### **Cultural Diplomacy Model in Ukraine**

#### **Legislative Framework of Ukrainian Cultural Diplomacy**

Since 1991, throughout the country's modern history of independence, Ukrainian state has made several attempts to set the legislation needed to develop a comprehensive approach for the promotion of the country abroad. The State programme for the support of the positive international image of Ukraine in 2003-2006 was approved in 2003, then in 2009 a dedicated State policy of the development of the positive image of Ukraine in 2009-2011 was established. The Law of Ukraine on Culture, providing a legal basis for the promotion of Ukrainian national culture abroad and development of international cultural collaboration, was adopted in 2011. However, the main push for the cultural diplomacy development occurred in 2014, following the sharp political developments of the Maidan Revolution of 2013-2014, annexation of Crimea, and beginning of the war in Donbas. In 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established the Public Diplomacy Division with a Cultural Diplomacy Department in its structure, started developing Public Diplomacy Strategy, and launched the annual Cultural Diplomacy Forum in cooperation with the international think tanks and civil society. In 2016, the Government approved the Long-term Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture, and the Concept of the Promotion of Ukraine in the World and Promoting Ukraine's Interests in the Global Information Space. In

2017, the Government launched an Interagency Commission on the Promotion of Ukraine in the World, established Ukrainian Institute and Ukrainian Cultural Foundation. In 2018, a single brand UKRAINE NOW was introduced. However, due to the armed conflict in the east of the state and subsequent economic difficulties, the presence of culture and cultural diplomacy, in particular, in the day-to-day agenda of the President, Government, and the Parliament was challenged. Thus, as of 2019-2020, a comprehensive strategy on public and cultural diplomacy initiated in 2015, is still not completed.

### **Main Actors of Ukrainian Cultural Diplomacy**

In Ukraine, responsibility for the cultural diplomacy conduct has been divided on the central level of government mainly between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (hereinafter - Ministry of Culture).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine plays a key role in formulating international cultural policy and the cultural image of Ukraine. Its Public Diplomacy Division, created in 2015, is meant to serve as a new mechanism of popularization of Ukraine in the world. 'Public diplomacy of Ukraine became real', stated then foreign affairs minister Pavlo Klimkin commenting on the establishment of the new MFA structural unit. Public Diplomacy Division coordinates the work of Ukrainian diplomatic missions abroad, approves their applications for funding cultural diplomacy events, initiates online social media campaigns, such as #CorrectUA, #KyivnotKiev, or #DiscoverDestinationUA. It also has in its vertical structure the dedicated department for cultural diplomacy, thus the latter is an integrated part of the MFA's activities in the domain of public diplomacy. Here is a quote from the publication on the official Facebook page of the MFA's Public Diplomacy division called 'Cultural diplomacy':

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we believe that culture is an integral part of foreign policy. We are certain that only in a country that has no self-respect the sphere of culture is a periphery. We must protect the interests of Ukraine globally not only at the negotiating table, but also in theaters, concert halls, museums, galleries, on stages and everywhere where art could possibly appear. This is a call for unity to curators, managers, artists, diplomats, civil servants and everyone who care about Ukraine's image around the world. Resources of everyone, including the Foreign Ministry, can be quite modest, but the synergy of possibilities of many does wonders. This is a high time to co-operate in developing joint projects and tell the world about Ukraine through art as well as facilitate international integration of our cultural industries.

Ukrainian embassies traditionally play an important role in performing cultural diplomacy activities. This country has 120 diplomatic posts abroad, which includes 80 embassies, 33 consulates, 7 permanent missions to international organizations, and since 2006, when the respective Presidential Decree was issued, 40% of such diplomatic posts (located notably in the EU and the US) have in their structures specialised cultural-informational centres (Tereshchuk, 2016). Cultural diplomacy instruments used by the diplomatic missions include days of Ukrainian culture, cinema festivals, art exhibitions, youth competitions.

In 2017, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine supported the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and founded Ukrainian Institute, the very first state establishment focused solely on cultural diplomacy. The Ukrainian Institute is an autonomous institution, though it is affiliated to and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Institute aims to facilitate international connections between people and institutions, and create opportunities for Ukraine to interact and cooperate with the rest of the world. Its objectives include increased international visibility and

improved understanding of Ukraine among people of other cultures; promotion of the Ukrainian language and culture; support of the international professional exchange activities in creative industries, culture, education and science; sharing Ukraine's experience of civil society development, state-building, commitment to principles of freedom, democracy and national unity. Instruments of the cultural diplomacy employed by this institution include organisation of the theatre tours, literary events, cinema screenings, concerts; mobility programmes for the Ukrainian cultural and creative industries abroad, their participation in book fairs, theatre, and film festivals etc; support of the departments of Ukrainian studies in foreign universities, research on the perception of Ukraine abroad. For the time being, since the newly-established institution does not have branches overseas, programmes of the Ukrainian Institute are implemented in tight cooperation with Ukrainian embassies.

The Ukrainian Cultural Foundation (UCF) is a state-owned institution created in 2017 aimed to facilitate development of culture and arts in Ukraine. Activities of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation are guided and coordinated by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine. Though its activities are mostly inward-oriented, UCF also strives to integrate Ukrainian culture into the world cultural space, thus playing an important role for Ukrainian cultural diplomacy. It creates favourable conditions for cultural and creative industries, promotes partnerships between Ukrainian artists and their colleagues abroad, contributes to the popularization of Ukrainian language, promotes preservation of cultural heritage, supports research related to culture and creative industries. This all serves to strengthen the country's ability to 'win hearts and minds', its capability to produce interesting cultural products and present itself in an innovative way on the world arena.

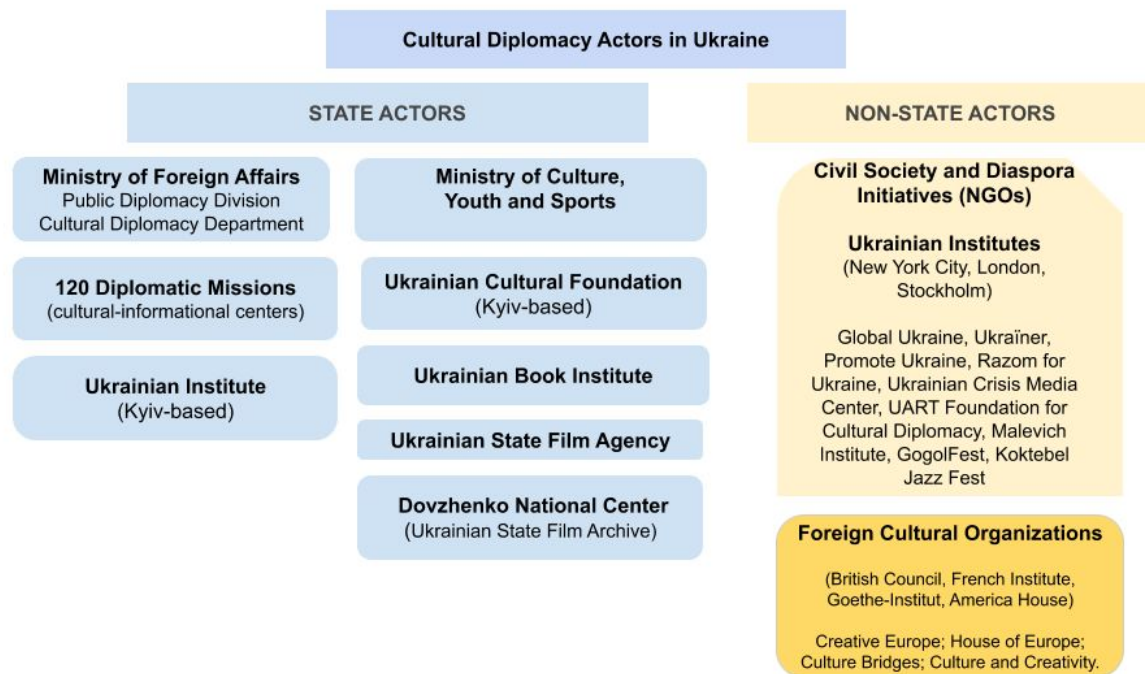
Ukrainian Book Institute (UBI) is a state institution founded in 2017 upon the initiative of the Ministry of Culture. As an emerging actor of cultural diplomacy, UBI popularizes Ukrainian



literature in the world and stimulates translation activities through the dedicated financial grants for the translators and publishers of the Ukrainian literature abroad<sup>14</sup>.

**Figure 7**

*Cultural diplomacy actors in Ukraine*



Ukrainian State Film Agency is a state institution, an actor of cultural diplomacy, which promotes Ukrainian cinema in the world. Its activities are coordinated and supervised by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine. The Agency facilitates the participation of Ukrainian film industry professionals in the international festivals, cooperates with foreign film archives, organizes movie screenings and meetings with the foreign audiences, press conferences etc.

<sup>14</sup> The dedicated financial support programme is yet to be approved by the Government in 2020

The Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Center is the largest Ukrainian State Film Archive. Founded under the order of the Ministry of Culture, it is focused on preservation, restoration, research and increase of the National Ukrainian Film Fund. As a state cultural diplomacy actor, Dovzhenko Center aims to promote Ukrainian cinema both within the country and abroad.

Non-state actors play a crucial role in conduct of national cultural diplomacy. First and foremost, civil society and diaspora have always been greatly involved in promoting Ukraine's positive image abroad. Ukrainian Institute of America, a nonprofit organization founded in 1948 by inventor and philanthropist William Dzus in New York City, was one of the first examples of such diaspora efforts. In 1979, Cardinal Josyf Slipyj, Patriarch of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, founded Ukrainian Institute in London. Both institutions are functioning up until this day, they are privately-run and have no affiliation to the Ukrainian Institute created in 2017 by the Foreign Ministry. In recent history, following the negative political and military developments in the region in 2013-2014, calls for the promotion and popularization of Ukraine were first and foremost met by the groups of volunteers, individual active citizens, and civil society. The most prominent examples of such cultural diplomacy initiatives are represented by the following NGOs, book fairs and culture festivals founded by active Ukrainians based both in the country and abroad: Ukrainian Institute of Sweden, Global Ukraine, Ukraïner, Promote Ukraine, Razom for Ukraine, Ukrainian Crisis Media Center, UART Foundation for Cultural Diplomacy, Malevich Institute, GogolFest, Koktebel Jazz Fest etc.

There are a number of international cultural organisations and programmes, which provide the capacity building opportunities for Ukrainian cultural sphere, thus making a highly valuable contribution to the development of Ukrainian cultural diplomacy. First of all, there are institutions traditionally charged with intercultural relations development, e.g. British Council, French Institute, Goethe-Institut, America House, which enjoy global presence and have country

offices in Ukraine. Secondly, there are various initiatives supporting culture and creative industries precisely in Ukraine (Culture Bridges; House of Europe) or Eastern Partnership region<sup>15</sup> (Culture and Creativity). In addition, Ukraine is an active participant of Creative Europe, the biggest EU-funded programme supporting culture and creative industries.

Similarly to Poland, Ukrainian cultural diplomacy mode of operation is based on state and non-state actors, with a difference though in the amount of contributions from both sides. Modern state actors of cultural diplomacy, such as Ukrainian Institute, Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, Book Institute, were launched just a few years ago, and, therefore, still are in the process of developing their mechanisms of partnership with conventional cultural diplomacy actors in Ukraine: foreign ministry, cultural ministry, diaspora and civil society. The latter is being named among the key players in the field due to its constant ability to mobilise the efforts fastly to protect the country's positive image, promote and communicate its cultural assets to the foreign audiences. On the contrary to Polish example, described in the previous chapter, Ukraine witnessed the increasing presence of international cultural organisations over the past two decades, as they were meant to support the capacities of raising cultural diplomacy actors within the country, both from the side of the state and NGOs.

### **Measuring Ukrainian Soft Power through the Lens of Culture**

Ukrainian soft power was not measured by any of the global polls or rankings up until the present day, as most of such surveys cover only major groupings of the states, e.g. G20 or OECD countries, which do not include Ukraine for the time being. Existing research on the topic performed by the national and international think tanks is rather fragmented, lacks updated statistical data, and mostly evaluates the bilateral dimension in Ukraine's relations with other states. However, we will make an attempt to assess the soft power of Ukraine using criterias as defined in the Soft Power 30 report, such as culture (appeal to foreign tourists, international

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<sup>15</sup> Eastern Partnership includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine

culture events), engagement (relative strength of the diplomatic network), education (attractiveness to foreign students), and digital (digital infrastructure and digital diplomacy).

Ukraine was ranked one of the least happy countries in Europe in 2017 according to the UN Sustainable Solutions Network<sup>16</sup> measurement of freedom to make life choices, corruption, generosity, and economic conditions. According to the World Happiness Report in 2020, the country climbed 10 positions and was given the 123d place among the 156 countries assessed<sup>17</sup>. At the same time, the UN World Tourism Organisation regularly names Ukraine among top-30 most attractive places for tourists in the world<sup>18</sup>. In spite of nearly 50% decrease in the number of foreign visitors in 2014, already during 2015-2018 respective statistics confirmed slow growth, up by a few percent annually. Ukrainian State Border Guard Service reported a sharp increase in the number of tourists in 2019, as from roughly 14 millions in 2017 and 2018, the figures went up to 27 million guests<sup>19</sup>, exceeding pre-crisis results of 23-24 million tourists each year. Since 2017, Ukraine has significantly increased its presence on international cultural events. Now it is a regular participant of international book fairs, film festivals, art exhibitions<sup>20</sup> etc. However, the lack of cultural diplomacy strategy makes the coordination of efforts among various state and non-state actors difficult and diminishes the overall result in ‘winning hearts and minds’ of global publics.

In the past decade, the number of international students choosing Ukraine as a place for studies has increased by 1.5 times, from 53 (2011) to 75 (2018) thousands. Ranked by their country of origin, the top-10 list includes India (19,78%), Morocco (9,77%), Azerbaijan (8,24%), Turkmenistan (6,66%), Nigeria (4,70%), Egypt (4,51%), Turkey (4,30%), China (3,60%), Israel

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<sup>16</sup> <http://factsmaps.com/most-and-least-happy-countries-in-the-world-2017/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://happiness-report.s3.amazonaws.com/2020/WHR20.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.unwto.org/country-profile-inbound-tourism>

<sup>19</sup> <https://dpsu.gov.ua/ua/news/Vse-menshe-rosiyan-priizdyat-v-Ukrainu-Derzhprikordonsluzhba-pidbila-pidsumki-2019-roku-/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://fashion-diplomacy.com/en/news/culture/on-the-development-of-cultural-diplomacy-in-ukraine/>

(3,25%), Georgia (3,17%)<sup>21</sup>. Also in 2019 the number of educational establishments ready to welcome foreign students have doubled in comparison to the results of 2015, going up from 185 to 443 institutions.

Ukraine has 120 diplomatic posts abroad. The mentioned number does not include nearly 100 honorary consulates. Provided that the latter are mostly dealing with business activities, thus are closer to the notion of economic diplomacy, in this paper we would not include them among the cultural diplomacy actors, though we may still acknowledge their positive influence in enhancing the visibility of Ukraine and its people abroad. The quantity of Ukrainian embassies, consulates general and permanent missions equals to the world's average (120 posts) and is quite comparable with a median number in OECD countries (134 posts)<sup>22</sup>.

According to the World Bank, in 2018 62.6% of Ukrainians were using the Internet<sup>23</sup>, whereas Internet World Stats date on Ukraine raises the same percentage for 93% of the total population. As digitalisation is a top priority of Ukrainian government, in late 2019 the respective Ministry of Digital Transformation was created. Since 2014, MFA and diplomatic missions of Ukraine more and more actively use digital platforms, such as official websites, accounts in social media, to communicate with Ukrainian citizens, diaspora, and foreign audiences. In 2019, the Twiplomacy<sup>24</sup> ranking put Ukrainian Foreign Ministry on the 24th place out of '50 Best Connected World Leaders on Twitter'<sup>25</sup> (EEAS holds 1st place; Russian MFA is 4th; Polish MFA is 35th). At the same time, Facebook account of the Presidential Office claimed 20th

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<sup>21</sup> According to Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine: <https://studyinukraine.gov.ua/en/life-in-ukraine/international-students-in-ukraine/>

<sup>22</sup> According to the country ranking of Lowy Global Diplomacy Index: [https://globaldiplomacyindex.lowyinstitute.org/country\\_rank.html](https://globaldiplomacyindex.lowyinstitute.org/country_rank.html)

<sup>23</sup> Respective World Bank statistics for Internet usage in Russia - 80.9%, in Poland - 77,5%  
[https://databank.worldbank.org/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report\\_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=UKR](https://databank.worldbank.org/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=UKR)

<sup>24</sup> <https://twiplomacy.com/ranking/the-50-best-connected-world-leaders-2019/>

<sup>25</sup> In terms of number of mutual followings

position out of '50 Most Active World Leaders'<sup>26</sup> (Russian MFA - 2nd; Office of Polish Prime Minister - 43rd), as well as 41st place among '50 World Leaders with the most interactions on Facebook' (1st place - Jair M. Bolsonaro; 2nd - Donald Trump)<sup>27</sup>. Official Instagram account of Ukrainian President also hit the world rankings in 2019: it was titled 3rd most efficient leader by number of posts, 5th by number of followers, 6th by number of interactions.

Overall, Ukrainian case is rather difficult when making an attempt to measure soft power of a country through the lens of culture, as the necessary statistics are not gathered nor by the state, neither by national or international NGOs or international think tanks. Therefore, based on the existing measurements of country's attractiveness to foreigners as a tourist destination, its appeal to foreign students, its level of digitalisation and engagement with foreign audiences through its diplomatic missions abroad, gives us rather general understanding of the comparative state of Ukrainian potential to 'win hearts and minds' of foreigners by utilizing its cultural goods and creative industries.

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<sup>26</sup> In terms of posts per day

<sup>27</sup> Neither Russia nor Poland ended up in top-50 in terms of interactions with followers on social media (Source: Twiplomacy)

### **Cultural Diplomacy Model in Russia**

Soft power from a Russian point of view is related both to public and cultural diplomacy. Vladimir Putin used the term ‘soft power’ in 2012 in his article ‘Russia and the changing world’. Partly mirroring the classical definition of Joseph S. Nye, Russian President notes that ‘soft power is a matrix of tools and methods to reach foreign policy goals without the use of arms but by exerting information and other levers of influence’ (Putin, 2012). This mentioning of ‘levers of influence’ could be seen as an attribute of his definition of soft power. Vladimir Putin then continues to argue about the boundaries that should exist in the efforts of the states to influence public opinion abroad. Those boundaries are defined by the notions of national sovereignty and national security. Thus, he differentiates Russian stances on the notion of soft power.

### **Legislative Framework of Russian Cultural Diplomacy**

Formation and implementation of policy of the Russian Federation in the sphere of international cultural and humanitarian cooperation<sup>28</sup> is carried out in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, Presidential decrees and orders, Governmental resolutions and orders, federal targeted programmes in the field of culture and education. The importance of cultural diplomacy was stipulated in the legal document titled ‘Main Directions of Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of International Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation’ approved by the President of the Russian Federation in 2010. The document claims that ‘in the context of efforts to actively oppose propaganda campaigns under the slogan of “detering” Russia’ cultural diplomacy ‘is able to work to strengthen the international authority of the country, to serve as a convincing evidence of the revival of the Russian Federation as a free and democratic state’.

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<sup>28</sup> As we discussed before, there is a discrepancy between the terms used in Russian and Western practice. As cultural diplomacy activities fall into the scope of Russian cultural and humanitarian cooperation, for the purpose of this paper we will analyse the legislative framework relevant to the latter.

### **Main Actors of Russian Cultural Diplomacy**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation (hereinafter - MID) is a leading state actor of Russian cultural diplomacy. MID elaborates general strategies, carries out diplomatic activities, provides a framework for development of international cultural co-operation, represents Russia in the international organisations, and coordinates external relations of other federal Ministries. The Ministry participates in national cultural programmes, supports development of the Alliance of Civilisations established under the UN aegis, and promotes activities of the Russian World ("Ruskiy Mir") Foundation. As far as we are concerned, there is no dedicated unit for public and cultural diplomacy in a visible structure of the Ministry published on its website. In spite of that, public and cultural diplomacy plays a crucial role in the foreign policy of the Federation, which could be confirmed following the official speeches of MID officials. For example, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's stated that "cultural diplomacy plays an increasing role in promoting an objective image of our country and in strengthening the atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding in international affairs" (MID, 2015) as well as "it plays a colossal, if not a leading role in a situation where there is a cooling in interstate ties" (MID, 2016). Considering the deteriorated context of the external relations of the Russian Federation, analysis of which goes beyond the scope of this dissertation, we may conclude that MID assigns an essential role in maintaining contacts with foreign publics to the domain of cultural diplomacy.

Diplomatic missions of Russia abroad are the active state actors of cultural diplomacy. Russia is among the top-5 countries in the world in terms of the number of diplomatic posts. The overall number of them reaches as high as 242, which includes 144 embassies, 85 consulates, 11 permanent missions, and two other representations<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Representative offices or delegations to countries where there is no formal diplomatic relationship, provided they are headed by a dedicated home-based head/chief of mission (Lowy Institute, Global Diplomacy Index, 2019)



The Ministry of Culture of Russian Federation negotiates and implements international agreements on cultural cooperation, "exports" Russian culture and arts, manages international cultural events in Russia, organises cultural exchanges and supports Russian participation in international artistic competitions, festivals, forums, exhibitions, stages, etc.

The Ministry for Regional Development of Russian Federation collaborates with international organisations in such fields as development of ethnic cultures, languages, folk arts and identity preservation and supervises regional and cross-border cultural co-operation.

Russian World ('Russkiy Mir') Foundation is a state institution established in 2007 by the Presidential decree, which aims its activities at foreign audiences all over the world and is engaged with the popularisation and promotion of the Russian language and culture. The Foundation is a joint project of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Science, however it is supported not only by public but also private funds. The opening sentence in the mission statement of the Foundation is put as follows: 'Mir means Community. Peace. World'. The declared mission lies in the aim to promote understanding and peace in the world by supporting, enhancing and encouraging the appreciation of Russian language, heritage and culture. As a cultural diplomacy actor Russkiy Mir Foundation promotes Russian culture by sponsoring cultural programs and financially supporting representatives of Russian arts and culture around the world. The Foundation has a worldwide network of Russian Centers and Russkiy Mir Cabinets launched in partnership with educational organizations around the world. Such centers and cabinets act as resource centers that provide access to a broad range of learning materials and popular science information from Russia. They also serve as a base for educational courses, and as a multimedia platform for art presentations and informal intercultural communication.

**Figure 8***Cultural diplomacy actors in Russia*

Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation ('Rossotrudnichestvo') was established in 2008 also by the Presidential Decree. It operates under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and possesses the global presence. The Agency has a network of 95 representative offices in 80 states, 72 Russian centers of science and culture in 62 states, and 23 representatives of the Agency serving in Russian Embassies in 21 states. The activities of Rossotrudnichestvo aim at the implementation of the state policy of international humanitarian cooperation (thus, including cultural diplomacy) and the international promotion of an objective image of contemporary Russia. As a cultural diplomacy actor, Rossotrudnichestvo promotes the studies of Russian language, Russian education services, facilitates cooperation between educational institutions, works with compatriots and youth abroad. One of the principal guidelines of action of

Rossotrudnichestvo, which goes beyond the scope of this paper though, is a provision of international development assistance. The priority area of cooperation of the Agency is comprised of the state-members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), where each state has Russian science and culture center<sup>30</sup>.

The Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund was established in 2010 in accordance with a Presidential decree. The Fund, named after Russian diplomat and politician of the XIX century Alexander Gorchakov, encourages the development of the public diplomacy field and supports establishment of a favorable for Russia public, political and business climate abroad. As a cultural diplomacy actor, it also advances international cultural and educational cooperation via conferences and seminars, exhibitions, forums, meetings and lectures, thus shaping favorable public opinion abroad.

Pushkin State Russian Language Institute was founded in 1966 as an educational and research center under the auspices of Moscow State University. The Institute specializes in teaching Russian to international students and in training teachers to teach Russian as a foreign language. The Institute could be considered as a cultural diplomacy actor due to its inclination to teach and spread Russian culture and literature to the foreign publics of different age groups. Besides being an official certification institution, it has a specialised programme called 'Ambassadors of the Russian Language', which is supported by the Ministry of education and science and targets popularization of the Russian language and culture through the network of young volunteers-ambassadors, usually students and young professionals. The Institute also offers online courses thus enlarging the geography of its operations through multimedia channels.

PICREADI is a non-governmental organization working in the field of public and cultural diplomacy. PICREADI stands for Public Initiative "Creative Diplomacy" and is a Moscow-based

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<sup>30</sup> Georgia left the CIS altogether in 2009 and Ukraine stopped participating in 2018

non-governmental, independent organization founded in 2010 by a group of public diplomacy experts committed to developing and supporting civil initiatives in the field. It combines elements of both an academic research center and a grass-roots organization, which raises awareness about challenges and opportunities for the country's public and cultural diplomacy and works to make both spheres more resilient.

As it could be seen, state actors greatly predominate among the organisations involved in the conduct of cultural diplomacy in Russia. Rather low level of participation among local NGOs and civil society, which often need additional financial support of their activities, including grants, from our point of view, could be connected to the recent amendments to the Russian legislation regarding the compulsory registration of the ‘foreign agents’<sup>31</sup>. This problem could be studied further in a separate paper. The foreign cultural organizations, financed by the governments of France, Germany, USA, China, etc. also have their networks functioning in Russia. However, the case of British Council<sup>32</sup>, which was formally accused of violating Russian tax law and Vienna convention, and had to cease its work in Russian Federation as of March 2018<sup>33</sup>, shows how relatively easy and fast foreign cultural organisations can be deprived of operations in the host country in case of deterioration of relations between their sending/founding countries and Russia. On the contrary to Ukraine and Poland, Russia does not participate in the Creative Europe, the EU's biggest programme in support of culture and creative industries on the European continent.

### **Measuring Russian Soft Power through the Lens of Culture**

The year of 2019 witnessed the positioning of Russian Federation in the last, 30th place, in comparison to the soft power leaders in the Soft Power 30 ranking. The country got its highest

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<sup>31</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-9-2019-0267\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-9-2019-0267_EN.html)

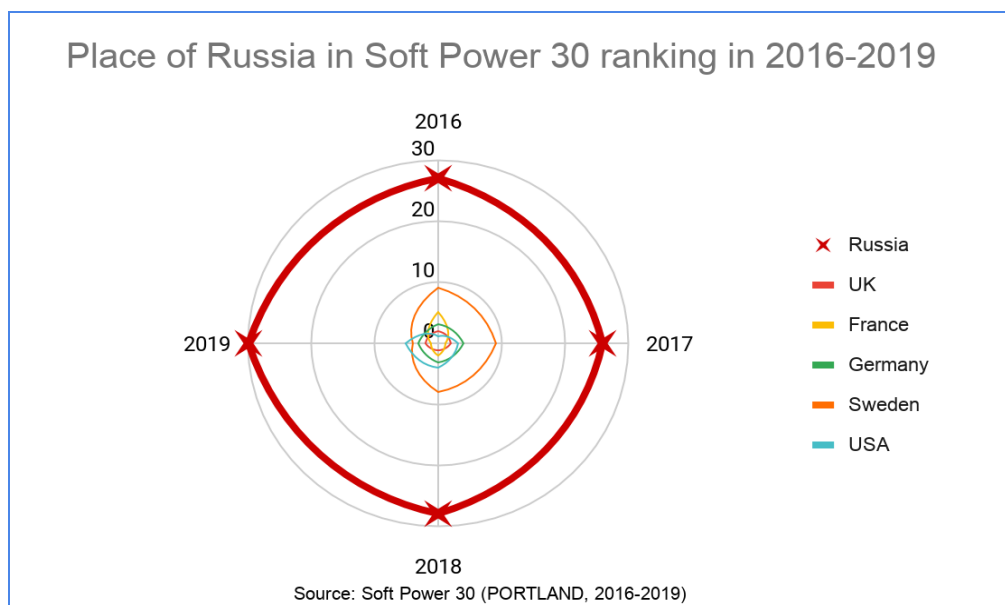
<sup>32</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/dec/13/russia.lukeharding>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.britishcouncil.org/contact/press/statement-british-council-russia>

result in 2017 when it was positioned as 26th, however with each subsequent year, in 2018 and 2019, it was losing two points, finally appearing as an outsider. In the latest Soft Power 30 report, Turkey was Russia's closest neighbour in the ranking, holding 29th place. Though China was one position behind Russia in 2016, the year when the latter joined the ranking, in 2017 and 2018, despite being a downward mover itself, it overran its closest rival and secured its position right in front (25th and 27th accordingly).

### Figure 9

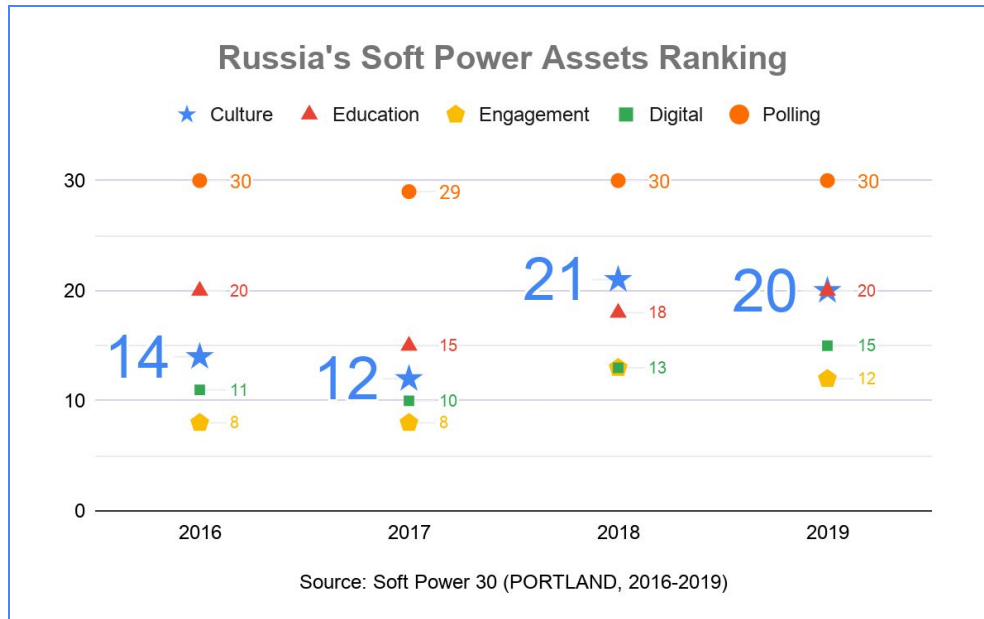
*Place of Russia in the Soft Power 30 in comparison to the soft power leaders*



When it comes to the analysis of the four cultural diplomacy sub-indices, contrary to the popular belief, the Soft Power 30 study does not put the Russian culture on the first or even second place among its key soft power assets. Culture sub-index for Russia was assigned 14th, 12th, 21th, and 20th places from 2016-2019. As it could be seen in Figure 10, the major loss of the positions (9 points) in terms of culture occurred in 2018.

**Figure 10**

*Russia's soft power assets ranking*

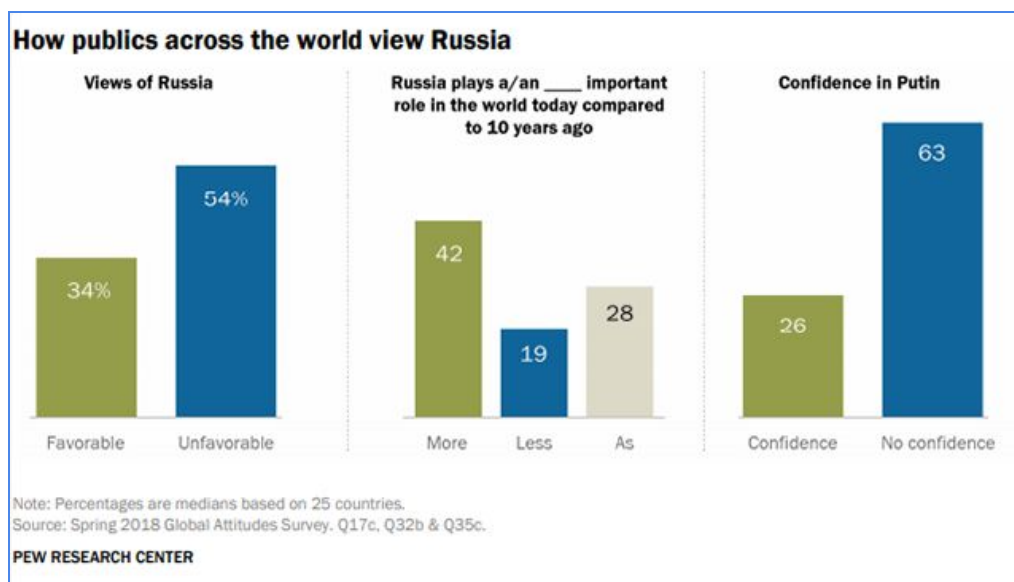


Note: Rank 1 being the best and 30 being the worst

Pew Research Center survey of early 2018 was conducted in 25 countries and showed the global public opinion on Russia: while recognising the important role this state plays in the world (61%), only 34% of overall respondents perceived the country positively (see Figure 11). The major events of 2017-2018 included a diplomatic row with the UK (Skripal case), accusations of Russian meddling into the U.S. elections, extension of EU sanctions against Russia, the decision of the latter to establish its permanent military presence in Syria, fourth inauguration of Vladimir Putin as President.

**Figure 11**

*How publics across the world view Russia (Pew Research Center, 2018)*



In late 2017 Russia was also banned by the International Olympic Committee from competing in the upcoming Winter Olympic games of 2018. Despite being a host country of 2018 World Football Cup, attended by more than three million people, the country just slightly improved its position in culture sub-index in 2019, moving to 20th place. According to the Soft Power 30 survey, the country's soft power strength lies in its extensive diplomatic posts network (received the highest ranks of 8 in 2016 and 2017, 13th in 2018, and 12th in 2019) and relatively developed digital sphere (shared the highest, 13th place, with 'engagement' sub-index in 2018).

However, considering the overall performance of Russian Federation in the Soft Power 30 ranking, we may conclude that the far-reaching network of embassies, consulates, permanent missions<sup>34</sup>, which are the primary institutional actors of cultural diplomacy, did not play a decisive role in forming the soft power of this state. Similar pattern is observed also with major

<sup>34</sup> According to the Global Diplomacy Index 2019 of the Lowy Institute, top-10 countries by the number of diplomatic posts worldwide are: China, United States, France, Japan, Russia, Turkey, Germany, Brazil, Spain, and Italy.

cultural events, which in Russian case did not lead to strengthening its global position as a soft power. On the contrary, we may observe the vice versa effect, when the activities and decisions surrounding the hard power (in military and economy sectors) downgraded the state's position among global soft powers.



### **Case Study: Cultural Diplomacy in Action**

In order to illustrate how cultural diplomacy models of the three countries operate in the international environment, we will examine how Poland, Ukraine, and Russia use one of the main instruments of cultural diplomacy called ‘bilateral years of culture’. We will have a closer look at the three cases organised by the respective countries during the same period, the year of 2019. First one is a celebration of the centenary of establishing diplomatic relations between Poland and Japan. Second case is a bilateral year of culture between Ukraine and Austria. And the third refers to the cross year of literature and language between Russia and Greece.

#### **Poland and Japan: Centenary of Diplomatic Relations**

Japan was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Poland in 1919, the year when two countries established diplomatic relations<sup>35</sup>. Since the democratization of Poland in 1989, its relations with Japan have been dynamically developing in a variety of fields, including political, economic, science, technology, and cultural areas. The celebration of the respective 100th anniversary was overseen by the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategic Partnership between Poland and Japan until 2020, signed by the respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs in May 2017.

#### ***Political Context of the Cultural Diplomacy Events***

It is important to admit that the events conducted under the auspices of the 100th anniversary of Poland-Japan diplomatic relations were not merely a representation of the active cultural relations and a cultural diplomacy showcase. The year of 2019 was also special for Japan, which

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<sup>35</sup> Severed during the WW2, the diplomatic relations between Japan and Poland were restored in 1957

assumed the G20 presidency for the first time, as well as hosted the forum of global leaders in Osaka. Therefore, it comes with no surprise that series of cultural events during the Polish-Japanese diplomatic anniversary year, were organized in parallel and/or in light of series of the official meetings at the governmental level, which were held before, during, and immediately after the year of 2019. For instance, in 2018 Japan's foreign minister Taro Kono visited Poland and together with his Polish counterpart, Jacek Czaputowicz, they presented the logo of next 100th anniversary ceremonies at the joint press conference in Warsaw. Japan's top diplomat could be also called a representative of the Polish cultural diplomacy forces, as back in 1984 he was an exchange student from the Washington-based Georgetown University at the Warsaw School of Economics. During this official visit in 2018, Mr. Kono returned to his place of studies after more than thirty years. Moreover, in light of the celebratory events of 2019, Japan's Crown Prince Akishino and Crown Princess Kiko paid an inaugural official visit to Poland in July 2019 in the framework of their first overseas trip since the ascension of Emperor Naruhito, which subsequently made Crown Prince Akishino first in line to the throne.

### ***Cultural Diplomacy Tools in Use***

The year of 2019, marking the centenary of establishing diplomatic relations between two countries, served as an opportunity to exploit the creative potential of meetings between Polish and Japanese artists. Polish cultural programme in Japan in 2019 included exhibitions in the historical sites and museums, performances in Japan's largest concert halls, encounters with Polish design and cuisine. The series of events devoted to the diplomatic anniversary celebration employed the motto of *ichi-go ichi-e* (*one time - one meeting; for this time only; once in a lifetime*), which has a deep meaning in Japanese culture of appreciation of the unrepeatable nature of a moment. Though this concept is mostly associated with the traditional Japanese tea ceremony, in case of Polish-Japanese diplomatic anniversary it was also used as a catchphrase of

celebratory events or, as organizers put it, ‘the joyful energy that is released when we get together’.

Contemporary art and design exhibitions accompanied by various performances, concerts, workshops, lectures, and screenings of Polish animated films, were presented as flagship events dedicated to the centenary of diplomatic relations. Series of music events included performances in the largest concert halls in Japan, while a tribute to the most famous Polish composer, Fryderyk Chopin, was paid through the presentation of a traveling exhibition. The Polish theatrical art was presented both to adult and youth audiences in Kyoto and Tokyo. Twenty two Polish films were screened during the 8th Poland Film Festival held in Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka and other cities. From the Japanese side there were also a series of events organized by the Embassy of Japan and Japan Foundation in Poland. That included diplomatic receptions, gastronomic festivals, culture festivals, theatrical performances, art exhibitions, lectures of Japanese academia representatives, Japanese language competitions, cherry planting ceremonies etc.

### ***Cultural Diplomacy Actors Involved***

These series of successfully organised cultural events confirm the existence of the efficient cooperation mechanisms established between the key actors of cultural diplomacy in Poland, such as Adam Mickiewicz Institute, Polish Institute in Tokyo, Embassy of Poland in Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Ministry of Culture, Polish Film Institute. The celebratory events were actively highlighted in posts in Polish and Japanese languages through the social media accounts of the mentioned institutional actors on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. For the purpose of the centenary of diplomatic relations between Poland and Japan two dedicated social media hashtags were introduced, such as #PL100JP and #JP100PL. In addition, the informational platform of Adam Mickiewicz Institute (culture.pl) published the programme, brief description of the overseen events, as well as dedicated articles introducing artists featured in the

particular cultural event. The case highlights participation of mainly state actors of Polish cultural diplomacy, such as foreign and cultural ministries accompanied by Polish and Adam Mickiewicz Institutes.

### *Impact on Bilateral Relations*

Shortly after the conclusion of the series of bilateral cultural events of 2019, Prime Minister of Poland, Mateusz Morawiecki, paid the first official working visit to Japan in January 2020, and, together with the Japanese Prime Minister, ABE Shinzo, they opened the Poland-Japan Summit covering various areas of bilateral cooperation. Leaders of both countries mentioned the importance of the 100th anniversary celebration with regards to the deepening and strengthening of the relations between two countries and expressed their willingness to develop the new Action Plan for the future strategic cooperation in the domains of politics, security, economics, science, technology, culture and people-to-people relations. In addition, the entry into force of the EU-Japan economic partnership, one of the biggest trade agreements concluded to date by the EU, on 1 February 2019 opened the door for new investment and trade opportunities for Polish entrepreneurs. For the time being, Japan is the largest Asian investor in Poland. It is estimated that Japanese investment has created around 40,000 jobs across the country<sup>36</sup>.

As we can see in this case, cultural diplomacy, together with other soft power tools (e.g. cooperation in science and technology) were applied in parallel to the conventional hard power instruments in the domains of security, trade, and economics. Such a comprehensive approach allowed to bring new dynamics into relations between Japan and Poland.

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<sup>36</sup> [https://tokio.msz.gov.pl/en/bilateral\\_cooperation/politics/japan\\_s\\_foreign\\_minister\\_visits\\_warsaw](https://tokio.msz.gov.pl/en/bilateral_cooperation/politics/japan_s_foreign_minister_visits_warsaw)

**Austria and Ukraine: bilateral cultural year**

The Year of Ukrainian culture in Austria and Austrian culture in Ukraine was announced on the 4th of September 2018 following the official meeting between then Ukrainian president, Petro Poroshenko, and Austrian Federal Chancellor, Sebastian Kurz. Head of Ukrainian state proclaimed that "cultural diplomacy serves as a very reliable and effective instrument for development of bilateral relations. Culture is the key to both Ukrainian and Austrian hearts, and it's going to bring our people closer together". The Austrian Chancellor confirmed that two countries have a good track of relationship already, and the Year of Culture will only strengthen the mutual ties: "we are very close at the interpersonal level, and I am very glad that we were able to agree on a common year of culture that will make the people of Ukraine and Austria closer. Both nations will benefit from this, it will enrich them".

***Political Context of the Cultural Diplomacy Events***

The meeting between two officials happened in the midst of the Austrian Presidency in the Council of the European Union (commenced on 1 July 2018). Few months earlier, in March 2018, the Federal President of Austria, Alexander Van der Bellen, visited Ukraine and opened a bilateral economic forum bringing around 40 representatives of 30 Austrian companies. Together with his Ukrainian counterpart, Petro Poroshenko, he also witnessed the signing of the agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Austria on cooperation in the field of education, science and culture. This intergovernmental document could be seen as a foundation of the bilateral cultural year of 2019, as it provided for the parties' support in terms of the organisation of the cultural and art events, first and foremost, activities of the Ukrainian Institute in Austria, as well as encouraged the contacts between museum institutions and libraries. However, the choice of Austria as a country to host an ever first year of Ukrainian

culture with a set of large-scale events was not accidental and could be explained via several arguments.

First of all, Vienna is considered to be one of the major hubs of international diplomacy in the world. The city is a seat of 40 international organisations, 320 bilateral and multilateral diplomatic representations with about 3,800 diplomats and more than 6,000 international officials. Secondly, the perception of Ukraine in Austria as still ‘terra incognita’ after the Russian violations of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity in 2014 played a role in Austrian official position towards imposition of sanctions against Russia by the EU in July 2014. While maintaining its policies in line with the official position of the European Union as per non-recognising annexation of Crimea and supporting implementation of Minsk agreements, Austria was reluctant to support the initial introduction of sanctions and their consequent prolongation during the years of the ongoing armed conflict in Donbas. Partly this could be explained by the long history of good relations between Austria and Russia, which very only strengthened after the commencement of the natural gas supplies by the USSR back in 1968. Moreover, Austrian OMV company is one of the key European partners and co-financiers of the Nord Stream 2 project devoted to the construction of the underwater gas pipeline that connects Russia to Germany via the Baltic Sea (half of the project budgets are covered by the Russian state oil and gas company Gazprom).

Moreover, in 2017, the European Values Think-Tank released a major study in the European Parliament which reviewed how EU member states perceived Russia in the context of its aggression against Ukraine that started in 2014. In this report, Austria (together with Belgium, France, Luxemburg, Spain, and Slovenia) appeared to be marked as a country that is ‘trying to stay away from the issues, does not acknowledge the threat, is outside of the conflict in Ukraine’, with a general trend showing ‘historical, energy-related or economically special relations with Russia’. The year of 2017 was also a period when Austria held a chairmanship in the

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and though support to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine was mentioned in the premier paragraphs of the Austrian Chairmanship Programme as regards its first priority of ‘diffusing armed conflicts’ in the region, Russia was not mentioned explicitly as a party of an armed conflict in Donbas, as well as the reference in the programme was made solely to the ‘*crisis in and around Ukraine*’.

Therefore, in the above mentioned circumstances, the bilateral cultural year of 2019 served as a good occasion for the Ukrainian side to apply cultural diplomacy mechanisms in an attempt to ‘win hearts and minds’ of Austrian publics, to better explain and present contemporary Ukrainian narratives through art and cultural events, as well as to restore and use the possible benefits of close historical ties between two states to keep questions vital for the security of the region high on the agenda of the official Vienna.

### ***Cultural Diplomacy Tools in Use***

The bilateral Cultural Year was inaugurated in February 2019 as a flagship project of the Ukrainian Institute that set the goal to bring together the creative potential of both countries and thereby facilitate stronger cultural and scientific cooperation between Austria and Ukraine. It was also the first time in history of the latter that a EU member state had proclaimed its year of culture in Ukraine. "It is not a one-way project: our program is based on joint participation of artists, experts and professionals from both countries, as well as collaboration between individuals and institutions, which will continue in the coming years" added Volodymyr Sheiko, Director General of the Ukrainian Institute. The thematic year covered the three focal areas of “History in Central Europe”, “Literature and Contemporary Art” as well as “Creativity and Innovation”. These areas were presented via the series of concerts, interdisciplinary academic conferences, theatre and music performances, workshops, cinema screenings, urban street art projects, discussions, book presentations, artistic residencies. For example, the programme

featured a concert of Ukrainian baroque music, a performance of the Yiddish music orchestra from Chernivtsi, a tour of austro-ukrainian duo of musicians, staged readings on human rights, a retrospective of films directed by Kira Muratova, a lecture revisiting Chernobyl nuclear disaster, open talks between Austrian and Ukrainian contemporary writers, an exhibition presenting Ukrainian modern art as reaction to Maidan revolution events of 2013-2014, a mini-festival of Ukrainian visual and digital arts, a multidisciplinary conference seeking to reexamine the history of the region through the lens of mobility of people, ideas, and objects jointly organised by Ukrainian and Austrian academia.

One of the distinctive features of this cultural diplomacy tool was a dedicated website [austriaukraine2019.com](http://austriaukraine2019.com), which was launched in February 2019 and gathered information about all the partners and events comprising the programme of the bilateral cultural year. In terms of social media support, one could use the hashtag #AustriaUkraine2019 to track, post and comment on the activities, which shows the inclination of the organisers to engage with Austrian, Ukrainian, and international audiences.

Overall, the cultural year included 200 projects held in 6 cities of Austria (Vienna, Salzburg, Graz, Linz, Wolfsberg, Steyr) and 14 cities of Ukraine. The organisers claimed to establish more than 100 partnerships with co-creation, co-productions and collaborations, thus opening new opportunities for Ukraine to participate in the international dialogue and to contribute to the global agenda.

### ***Cultural Diplomacy Actors Involved***

Apart from the Ukrainian Institute, cultural diplomacy institutional actors that cooperated on this project from Ukrainian side included Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Embassy of Ukraine in Austria, Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, Ukrainian State Film Agency, Ukrainische



Kulturtag/U stream Fest, Ukrainian Youth Association in Austria, Ukraïner project, various theatres, art galleries and museums, universities, festivals, orchestras, cultural platforms and creative unions.

This case is also an example of how efficiency of the head of Ukrainian diplomatic mission was employed for the benefit of the project. Dr. Oleksandr Scherba, Ukraine's Ambassador to Austria since 2014, is known among the governmental and experts networks as a good public speaker, who is active in various types of media, including both classical types and modern social media platforms. Moreover, according to the survey conducted among the Ukrainian foreign affairs expert community in December 2019<sup>37</sup> by Ukrainian Prism, a network-based non-governmental analytical center, Ukrainian embassy in Austria was rated as the third most productive in representation and protection of Ukrainian interests abroad. Representatives of Ukrainian Institute acknowledged that it was the contacts and networks of the embassy that helped to realise a lot of projects comprising the programme of the Ukraine-Austria bilateral cultural year.

The case is particular since it showed, firstly, an ability to establish efficient working relations between the newly established state cultural diplomacy institution based in Kyiv and Ukrainian embassy abroad. Secondly, it could be called 'a success story' in terms of the ability of state actors to cooperate with civil society and diaspora organisations, which traditionally play an important role in conduct of Ukrainian cultural diplomacy.

### ***Impact on Bilateral Relations***

The year of 2019 was a challenging period both for Ukrainian and Austrian political environments. The Russia-related 'Ibiza-gate' corruption scandal emerged in May 2019 and led to the resignation of Austria's Vice-Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache, bringing down the

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<sup>37</sup> <http://prismua.org/2019-12-20/>

coalition government on May 27, since the incumbent Chancellor Sebastian Kurz had lost a confidence vote just one day after his party triumphant victory in European elections. The snap parliamentary elections were scheduled for early September 2019 and until then the country was governed by a caretaker government. Consequently, the conservative party led by Kurz, back then still the youngest state leader in Europe, won the elections and formed a new coalition. Also Ukraine had its scheduled presidential elections completed in April 2019, which then were followed by the snap parliamentary ballot in July 2019. As we can see, during the major part of the Austria-Ukraine bilateral cultural year, Kyiv, similarly to Vienna, was going through the full re-shuffling of power, thus both states were experiencing turbulent times.

Former Ambassador of Austria to Ukraine, Mrs Hermine Poppeler, upon finishing her service in Ukraine in August 2019, spoke about the new potentials opened for productive bilateral relations as a result of the cultural year. According to the diplomat, this cultural diplomacy instrument helped to see Ukraine through the lens other than those of the armed conflict happening in its eastern regions<sup>38</sup>. In addition, Austria remains among top-10 foreign investors of Ukraine, and the year of 2019, according to preliminary statistical results, brought a 20% increase<sup>39</sup> in volumes of trade between two countries. Statistics on tourist arrivals from Austria to Ukraine in 2019 is yet to be published, however the available data shows tremendous growth of Austria popularity as a touristic destination for Ukrainians, number of tourists increased in 1.5 times in the first half of 2019<sup>40</sup> in comparison to the same period in 2018. Considering the fact that individual citizens could act as well as actors of cultural diplomacy, such results in the domain of tourism provide for the possibility of further rapprochement in terms of people-to-people contacts, which are vital for Ukraine's soft power.

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<sup>38</sup> <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-polytics/2761443-posol-avstrii-zaversue-svou-kadenciu-v-ukraini.html>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-polytics/2858101-oleksandr-serba-posol-ukraini-v-avstrii.html>

<sup>40</sup> [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=2ahUKEwjAysy1yPvoAhWFyqYKHbEQBJwQFjABegQIAxAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.me.gov.ua%2FDocuments%2FDownload%3Fid%3D13fa3ae9-19e7-42a7-8feb-ebdab617d977&usg=AOvVaw2JENIFjuPmD4yM\\_OUSZUys](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=2ahUKEwjAysy1yPvoAhWFyqYKHbEQBJwQFjABegQIAxAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.me.gov.ua%2FDocuments%2FDownload%3Fid%3D13fa3ae9-19e7-42a7-8feb-ebdab617d977&usg=AOvVaw2JENIFjuPmD4yM_OUSZUys)

### **Russia and Greece: Cross-Year of Language and Literature**

The plans to organise the cross year of Language and Literature between Russia and Greece in 2019 was announced on 8 December 2018 by the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, during the joint press conference following the high-level meeting with the Prime Minister of Hellenic Republic, Alexis Tsipras, who was paying a working visit to Moscow for the first time since 2015. Referring to Greek-Russian cultural and humanitarian cooperation, Russian leader made a remark that ‘a positive public response is generated by annually held joint cultural festivals, tours of famous artists and performance groups’, listing some of the typical instruments of cultural diplomacy.

#### ***Political Context of the Cultural Diplomacy Events***

This interstate event is the third consecutive cross year of the two countries after 2016. The first was the Comprehensive Year of Russia and Greece, after that came the Year of Tourism in 2017. Though the year of 2018 marked the 190th anniversary of diplomatic relations and the 25th anniversary of the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement between Russia and Greece, during that period no major interstate events were held. According to the Pew Research Center, in 2018 the percentage of Greeks perceiving Russia positively dropped by 12 p.p. and comprised 52%, the lowest score the country had in this regard since 2012. It should be noted, though, that such a result in 2018 was still the highest among the European countries assessed, in which only the third of the population would see Russia in a positive way. This sharp shift of public opinion in Greece towards Russia in 2018 might be explained considering the downturn of bilateral relations which happened the very same year. In July 2018, Greek state expelled two Russian diplomats over allegations of their attempts to meddle in the internal affairs of the receiving state. In particular, Russian embassy officials were accused of interference to the negotiations between North Macedonia and Greece over a long-standing dispute between two countries

regarding the official name of the Western Balkan state. Russia denied the allegations and threatened to reply with reciprocal measures. This strong shift in two-sided relations came in high contrast to the previous *status quo* policies of Greece towards Russia, which were described by the MFA of the former as ‘strong historical ties of friendship based on shared spiritual and cultural values’: during 2015-2017, being one of those member states largely affected by the Kremlin embargo on EU agriculture products, Athens advocated for the lift of bloc’s sanctions against Russia introduced in 2014. The named period fell down on a highly challenging time for Greece due to its then ongoing financial crisis and consequent participation in the third economic adjustment programme introduced through the European Stability Mechanism from 19 August 2015 until 20 August 2018. Therefore, as 2018 marked the end of the bailout measures towards Greece, the announcement of the cross year of Language and Literature could be seen, along with the resumed talks on economic affairs, as one of the first attempts to normalise bilateral relations between Russia and Greece.

### ***Cultural Diplomacy Actors Involved***

Preparations for the cross year continued during the next Greek-Russia official meeting in Athens, held in January 2019 between the Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Giorgos Katrougalos, and the Deputy Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Russian Federation, Alexander Grushko. The bilateral talks focused on the development of a joint action programme for the “Greece-Russia Year of Language and Literature 2019-20”. The call for this major cultural event was endorsed during the 12th Greek-Russian Joint Interministerial Committee held in Thessaloniki in April 2019 and co-chaired by the Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sia Anagnostopoulou, and the Minister of Transport of the Russian Federation, Yevgeny Ditrikh. Finally, the cross year of Language and Literature was inaugurated by the year coordinator, Special Representative of Russian President on International Cultural Cooperation, Ambassador-at-large, Mikhail Shvydkoi, and the Special Representative of the Greek Prime

Minister for issues pertaining to Greek-Russian cultural years, Ilias Klis, on 9 May 2019 during the Thessaloniki International Book Fair, where Russia was entitled a status of ‘honorary country-participant’. Also attending on the Greek side were the Minister of Culture and Sport Myrsini Zorba and the Deputy Foreign Minister Markos Bolaris. The Russian side was represented by the Ambassador of Russia to Greece Andrei Maslov, the First Deputy Minister of Science and Higher Education Grigory Trubnikov, the Deputy Minister of Education Tatyana Sinyugina, as well as representatives of the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Media, and Rossotrudnichestvo.

As we can see, the key actors involved in the cross-year planning and execution are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Education, Rossotrudnichestvo, Special Representative of Russian President, Federal Agency for Press and Mass Media. Therefore, this case clearly confirms the prevalence of the state actors in the Russian cultural diplomacy practice.

### *Cultural Diplomacy Instruments in Use*

The opening of the cross Year of Language and Literature of 2019 began with the visit of the Russian delegation to the military cemetery located in Thessaloniki. Diplomats, politicians and public figures commemorated the memory of the soldiers who died in WW2. Programme of events and activities during the cross year included presentations of the novelties of literature, translations of Russian and Greek classics, music festivals, book donations to schools teaching Russian in Greece, internet-olympiad on byzantine and modern greek literature, visits of library delegations, photo exhibitions, bilateral conferences on language teaching and culture dialogue, and thematic competitions on literature. Most of the activities in Greece were organized by the Russian centre of science and culture in Athens (local office of Rossotrudnichestvo). On the contrary to the Comprehensive Year of Russia and Greece in 2016, when the dedicated logo,

website, social media profiles and hashtag (#elru2016) were created, the Cross Year of Language and Literature is not highlighted in the media. Sporadic articles found in the newspapers and on social media mostly covered only the day of inauguration without giving complex and clear information on the development of the year.

As we can see, the types of the cultural diplomacy tools chosen in this case were limited due to the specific thematic of the bilateral cultural year, as they were focused precisely on activities related to literature and language promotion. This case also highlights the usage of WW2 legacy as one of the key narratives of Russian public and cultural diplomacy.

### ***Impact on Bilateral Relations***

The year of 2019 witnessed the change of government in Greece, as the centre-right New Democracy won the nation's snap general election, while the previously ruling left-wing Syriza party secured second place. While meeting his Russian counterpart in November 2019 in Moscow, Nikos Dendias, foreign minister in the new Greek government led by Kyriakos Mitsotakis, announced a new chapter in relations between the two countries<sup>41</sup>.

In addition, in February 2020, Pew Research Center published an updated survey on Russia's image in the world. In comparison to the preceding year, in 2019 the percentage of Greeks who have a favourable opinion of Russia increased by 6 p.p. and climbed to 58%<sup>42</sup>. And though, due to limitations of this research, it's difficult to measure a particular role of any of the cultural diplomacy instruments, including those of bilateral years, we may acknowledge its overall importance in restoring and maintaining a more friendly environment between two countries.

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<sup>41</sup> <https://www.globalresearch.ca/new-chapter-greek-russian-relations/5694380>

<sup>42</sup> [https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/02/07/russia-and-putin-receive-Low-ratings-globally/ft\\_2020-02-07\\_russia\\_01/](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/02/07/russia-and-putin-receive-Low-ratings-globally/ft_2020-02-07_russia_01/)

## Conclusions

The concept of soft power was introduced by Joseph S. Nye right at the beginning of a decade that witnessed the collapse of the Iron Curtain and the end of the Cold War. Considering the back-then existing trend for rapprochement between the former adversaries, Eastern and Western blocs, the emergence of a non-coercive approach in bilateral and multilateral relations perfectly fitted the actual international environment. In 1990, Professor Nye claimed that power of a state lies not only in its military and economic resources, but in its **ability to change the behavior of other states by attraction and persuasion, i.e. using the key assets of the co-optive or soft power: culture, values, and policies (institutions)**. Literature analysis done in this paper shows that there is a lack of agreement among the academics and practitioners on the key definitions in the field, including stances taken by the representatives of Poland, Ukraine, and Russia, regarding soft power, international cultural relations, public and cultural diplomacy. Yet the view of public diplomacy as a key soft power tool prevails. The concept of the term goes beyond traditional diplomacy and is built on a premise that people's attitudes in a given country affect the foreign policy in such a country. Hence, **public diplomacy is an activity aimed to cultivate or influence public opinion abroad, which is performed by governments, non-governmental organisations (civil society), international organisations, and individual citizens**. First and foremost, the mentioned public diplomacy actors engage with foreign publics by exporting culture, a principal resource of soft power. Such a dimension or element of public diplomacy is called cultural diplomacy, which we presented via the analysis of its existing definitions, resources, instruments, and actors. Having studied various approaches, we offer the following definition of cultural diplomacy: **it is a soft power tool and an element of public diplomacy, associated with a presentation and promotion of a country's culture abroad in order to build long-term relationships with publics overseas, thus creating an enabling environment for such a country in international affairs**. In all the three countries in scope of this paper, cultural diplomacy is seen as a sub-element of public diplomacy aimed to advance state's

policies and promote national interests through the use of culture. However, when it comes to the main narratives promoted by each state, we observe the differences: Poland sets historical aspects in the center, Russia puts an emphasis on the national identity, whereas Ukraine presents cultural diplomacy from the perspective of national security.

Cultural diplomacy as a soft power tool employs culture, primarily a soft power asset, as its resource. This paper claims that resources of cultural diplomacy are derived from the cultural industries (as defined by UNESCO), which produce and distribute cultural goods or services. Cultural diplomacy instruments include mobility programmes; various cultural events; bilateral years of culture; exchange of expertise; promotion of language, certain cultural practices or art forms; and negotiations regarding repatriation or quotas. This paper points out that an act of establishment of a cultural institute is an instrument of cultural diplomacy, whereas a cultural institute *per se* is an actor of cultural diplomacy. Structure of the cultural diplomacy actors mirrors that of public diplomacy, as such actors are divided into two key groups of state and non-state institutions. In this paper we highlighted that the former include not only traditional diplomacy structures, such as foreign ministries and diplomatic posts, but also all the state bodies involved in the cultural activities within the state (e.g. ministries of culture, their subordinates and affiliated institutions), provided that the scope of their responsibilities include an international relations aspect. However, it is the increasing role of the non-state actors of cultural diplomacy (cultural foundations, cultural NGOs etc) that could be called a characteristic feature of cultural diplomacy in the 21st century. Despite the existing similarities between the notions of cultural relations and cultural diplomacy, we assumed that those could not be viewed as substitutes, as they differ in their ultimate goals (mutual understanding vs. self interest), ways culture is valued (intrinsic vs. instrumental), actors involved, and the character of the relations (reciprocity vs. unidirectionality). Though the difficulty of measuring efficacy of soft power instruments is universally acknowledged, there were a few successful attempts to produce respective global assessments, namely 'Soft Power 30' report by the private US-based company, and the soft power study commissioned by the British Council to the University of Edinburgh.



This dissertation presented the way how four out of six sub-indices offered in ‘Soft Power 30’ approach, such as ‘culture’, ‘education’, ‘engagement’, and ‘digital’, could be used to evaluate the cultural diplomacy of the three states in scope of this paper.

Existing cultural diplomacy models of Poland, Ukraine, and Russian Federation were described through analysing the respective legislative frameworks and set of key cultural diplomacy actors. Poland has two principal documents that guide its external policies, including public and cultural diplomacy. Those are titled Polish Foreign Policy Strategy and Polish Foreign Policy Guidelines. Cultural diplomacy in Poland is conducted by not only traditional state actors, such as foreign or cultural ministry, but also by local public authorities and non-governmental public organisations. There are established mechanisms of cooperation and communication between the state and respective NGOs, e.g. public tenders, competitions, and joint-projects. A distinctive feature of Polish cultural diplomacy model provides for the lesser role played by major foreign cultural organisations. Position of Poland among the top-30 soft powers of the world was stable over the last four years, balancing between 23rd and 24th place ever since the country was first included in the respective ranking in 2015. However, analysis shows that international polling assessed Poland much worse than its overall scoring shows. The sharp change in peoples attitudes happened precisely in 2018, when the country went through a series of street protests against the government over the attempts to reform judiciary, as well as a so-called Holocaust Law was passed. Thus, we can assume an existence of a link between the political developments happening within the country and its perception by the foreign publics, eventually devaluating application of any soft power tool, including cultural diplomacy.

Since 1991 Ukrainian state has made several attempts to set the legislation needed for the promotion of the country abroad. The main push for the cultural diplomacy development occurred following the Maidan Revolution of 2013-2014, annexation of Crimea, and beginning of the war in Donbas, when in 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs started developing Public

Diplomacy Strategy. Yet, since the very same reasons that created a call for mobilisation of the country's soft power also caused severe difficulties for the state's economy, the presence of cultural diplomacy on the government's agenda was challenged. Thus, as of 2019-2020, a comprehensive strategy on public and cultural diplomacy has still not been completed.

Similarly to the Polish model, responsibility for the cultural diplomacy conduct on the central level of government in Ukraine has been divided mainly between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports. Remarkable role, which is played by the non-state actors of cultural diplomacy, is a distinctive feature of the national cultural diplomacy model. Ukrainian civil society and diaspora proved their ability to mobilise the efforts fastly to promote the country's cultural assets to the foreign audiences. In addition, international cultural organizations play a very important role as well, as they actively support the local cultural sphere via grants and capacity building programmes.

Ukrainian case is rather difficult when making an attempt to measure its soft power through the lens of culture, as the necessary statistics have not been gathered nor by the state, neither by NGOs or think tanks. Our current analysis of the existing measurements of country's attractiveness to foreigners as a tourist destination, its appeal to foreign students, its level of digitalisation and engagement with foreign audiences through its diplomatic missions abroad, gave us rather general understanding of the comparative state of Ukrainian potential to 'win hearts and minds' of foreigners by utilizing its cultural goods and creative industries and set a basis for the future more detailed research, which will be focused precisely on Ukrainian cultural diplomacy.

Soft power from a Russian point of view is related both to public and cultural diplomacy. However, Russian stances on soft power are rather different from those originally offered by Joseph S. Nye. Most evidently it could be seen in a definition outlined by the leader of the state,

Vladimir Putin, featuring the 'levers of influence' as an attribute of soft power. Legislative framework of national cultural diplomacy includes the state's constitution, federal laws, presidential decrees and orders, governmental resolutions etc.

State actors greatly predominate among the organisations involved in the conduct of cultural diplomacy in Russia. Level of participation among NGOs and civil society is rather low, whereas foreign cultural organizations, supported by the governments of France, Germany, USA, China, etc. have their networks functioning in Russia. However, the situation that occurred with British Council offices showed the great level of vulnerability of such foreign cultural organisations functioning inside the country. On the contrary to Ukraine and Poland, Russia is not a participant country of Creative Europe, the EU's biggest programme in support of culture and creative industries on the European continent.

The year of 2019 witnessed the positioning of Russian Federation in the last, 30th place, in comparison to the soft power leaders in the Soft Power 30 ranking. When it comes to the analysis of the four cultural diplomacy sub-indices, contrary to the popular belief, the Soft Power 30 study does not put the Russian culture on the first or even second place among its key soft power assets. We may conclude that the Russian far-reaching network of diplomatic posts did not play a decisive role in forming the soft power of this state. Similar pattern is observed also with major cultural events, which in Russian case did not lead to strengthening its global position as a soft power. On the contrary, we may observe the vice versa effect, when the activities and decisions surrounding the hard power (in military and economy sectors) downgraded the state's position among global soft powers.

Case study on cultural diplomacy in action illustrated how cultural diplomacy models of Poland, Ukraine, and Russia operate in the international environment. In particular, the final part of the paper examined how the three countries use one of the main instruments of cultural diplomacy

called ‘bilateral years of culture’. The cases that were analysed included a celebration of the centenary of establishing diplomatic relations between Poland and Japan; a bilateral year of culture between Ukraine and Austria; and a cross year of literature and language between Russia and Greece.

Poland and Japan celebrated the 100th anniversary of the diplomatic relations in 2019. That year Japan assumed the G20 presidency for the first time, as well as it hosted the forum of global leaders. Therefore, series of cultural events during the Polish-Japanese diplomatic anniversary year, were organized in parallel and/or in light of series of the official meetings at the governmental level, which were held before, during, and immediately after the year of 2019. The series of events devoted to the diplomatic anniversary celebration employed the motto of *ichi-go ichi-e*, used as a catchphrase of implying ‘the joyful energy that is released when we get together’. Cultural diplomacy tools that were used by Polish side included various exhibitions, performances, concerts, workshops, lectures, and movie screenings. In addition, all the events were actively promoted in social media. The study of the Polish case highlighted participation of mainly state actors of Polish cultural diplomacy, such as foreign and cultural ministries accompanied by Polish and Adam Mickiewicz Institutes. Positive impact on the bilateral relations brought by cultural diplomacy was officially acknowledged by both sides. Together with other soft power tools (e.g. cooperation in science and technology), cultural diplomacy instruments were applied in parallel to the conventional hard power tools in the domains of security, trade, and economics. Such a comprehensive approach allowed to bring new dynamics into relations between Japan and Poland.

The Year of Ukrainian culture in Austria and Austrian culture in Ukraine was announced in September 2018 following the official meeting between the heads of states, which took place in the midst of the Austrian Presidency in the Council of the European Union. The bilateral cultural year served as a good occasion for the Ukrainian side to apply cultural diplomacy mechanisms in

an attempt to ‘win hearts and minds’ of Austrian publics, to better explain and present contemporary Ukrainian narratives through art and cultural events, as well as to restore and use the possible benefits of close historical ties between two states to keep questions vital for the security of the region high on the agenda of the official Vienna. The cultural year included 200 cultural projects held in 6 cities of Austria and 14 cities of Ukraine and claimed to establish more than 100 partnerships with co-creation, co-productions and collaborations, thus opening new opportunities for Ukraine to participate in the international dialogue and to contribute to the global agenda. The distinctive features of this cultural diplomacy instrument application included active social media support, which proved the inclination of the organisers to engage with Austrian, Ukrainian, and international audiences. The case is particular since it showed, firstly, an ability to establish efficient working relations between the newly established state cultural diplomacy institution based in Kyiv and Ukrainian embassy abroad. Secondly, it could be called ‘a success story’ in terms of the ability of state actors to cooperate with civil society and diaspora organisations, which traditionally play an important role in conduct of Ukrainian cultural diplomacy. During the major part of the Austria-Ukraine bilateral cultural year, Kyiv, similarly to Vienna, was going through the full re-shuffling of power, thus both states were experiencing turbulent times. Nevertheless, the series of events proved to be efficient as they opened new potentials for productive bilateral relations. There was a significant increase in tourist flows from Ukraine to Austria, which provided for the possibility of further rapprochement in terms of people-to-people contacts that are vital for Ukraine’s soft power. In addition, Austria remains among top-10 foreign investors of Ukraine, and the year of 2019, according to preliminary statistical results, brought a 20% increase in volumes of trade between two countries.

The plans to organise the cross year of Language and Literature between Russia and Greece was announced in December 2018 by the Russian President following his meeting with the Greek Prime Minister. As 2018 marked the end of the bailout measures towards Greece, such an announcement could be seen, along with the resumed talks on economic affairs, as an attempt to

normalise bilateral relations between two states, as they were going through the downturn during most of that year. The key actors involved in the cross-year planning and execution were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Education, Rossotrudnichestvo, Special Representative of Russian President, Federal Agency for Press and Mass Media. Therefore, this case clearly confirmed the prevalence of the state actors in the Russian cultural diplomacy practice. The types of the cultural diplomacy tools used in the Russian case were limited due to the specific thematic of the bilateral cultural year, as they were focused precisely on activities related to literature and language promotion. This case also highlighted the usage of WW2 legacy as one of the key narratives of Russian public and cultural diplomacy. Due to limitations of this research, in this case it's difficult to measure a particular impact of any of the cultural diplomacy instruments. However, we may acknowledge its overall importance in restoring and maintaining a more friendly environment between Russia and Greece observed as of the end of 2019 on the central government level, and confirmed by the public opinion surveys conducted in early 2020.

Overall, this paper shows the differences in the conduct of cultural diplomacy in Poland, Ukraine, and Russia. While being principally similar in the structure of the legislative frameworks and usage of particular types of cultural diplomacy instruments, the three countries have different approaches when it comes to the definition of the basic terms used by the practitioners and academia, key narratives and messages being transmitted to the foreign publics, structure of the cultural diplomacy actors in terms of the inclusion of the non-governmental organizations and willingness of the state authorities to cooperate with foreign cultural institutions. Whether Polish, Ukrainian or Russian cultural diplomacy model is more efficient over the two others remains to be explored in further research, however the study of the cases in this paper showed an ability of each to deliver positive results when applied according to the specific political context of the bilateral relations.

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