



**SYNERGING
ENERGIES**



RUSSIAN OCTOPUS IN ACTION

CASE “UKRAINE”

Russian Octopus in Action. Case “Ukraine”

On the basis of expert group research under the aegis
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The research discloses the Russian influences, lobbying and subversive activities in Ukraine in the conditions of the hybrid aggression unleashed by Russia, which has been going on for the seventh year.

It covers a wide range of issues related to informational influences, propaganda, systematic long-term activities aimed at creating informal groups of influence, non-governmental organizations, the media, and other elements of Russia’s extensive network of influence in society and governmental bodies. The problem of creation and functioning of business structures, which feed the relevant networks and covertly contribute to the spread of Russian influence in various spheres of public life and at different levels of the power, is considered.

The publication is intended for a wide range of experts and journalists who study the topic of nonlinear influences in society and politics.



SYNERGING ENERGIES
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**The opinions and assessments expressed in the publication reflect
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1. RUSSIA'S CRYPTO WAR AGAINST UKRAINE AND EUROPE

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the establishment of independence of the former Soviet Republics, Russia has developed a doctrine of “zones of influence”—similar to the Soviet doctrine of limited sovereignty for the countries of the Communist Camp. According to this doctrine, Ukraine should remain in the zone of influence of the Russian Federation. During the presidency of B. Yeltsin, the implementation of this doctrine was relatively mild, mainly via economic pressure and debt blackmail. Low oil prices and two Chechen campaigns in the North Caucasus narrowed Russia's ability to reincorporate Ukraine and other new independent states in the USSR 2.0, as a continuation of the CIS. With the coming of Vladimir Putin to power and the increase in oil prices and revenues from hydrocarbon exports, the actions in this direction became systematic and severe. New projects for the reintegration of the post-Soviet space—the Common Economic Space, the Eurasian Economic Union and the Customs Union—were only new facades for a USSR 2.0. Attempts to choose a different geopolitical vector—integration into NATO and the EU, were forcefully obstructed. Two examples of such obstruction are Russian aggression against Georgia in 2008 and the ongoing aggression against Ukraine since 2014.

The pinnacle of the art of hybrid war is to launch the mechanism of self-destruction of the country from within, using massive propaganda from outside, and the agents of influence and subversion from within. The life-giving energy in this case is both an existing and additionally created in the course of hybrid aggression conflictogenic potential.

The sector-wide external management network (EMN), created with the involvement of various types of agents and lobbyists shall be specifically mentioned. Their essence and purpose are to create a mechanism for influence and manipulating the highest state leadership, first of all, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. In the presence of such a mechanism, behaviour that will lead to surrender of the positions without fighting will be imposed on the enemy. According to the Chinese military treatise Sun Tzu – war is a way of trickery and deception. In the case of Ukraine, the contours of external governance were formed along the lines of administrative, energy and special services resources, and proved to be quite efficient.

Russian influence on the situation in Ukraine tends to be comprehensive and monopolistic. Therefore, it is no stranger to any of the socially significant spheres – not only political, financial or energy, but also sports, movies, television, and social networks. And the key strategic goal of this impact is to establish control over the Ukrainian state as a system of the Ukrainian society or the Ukrainian nation organization.

And the defence and security subsystem of the Ukrainian state is the key to such control. After all, if the state does not have the physical ability to resist aggression both from outside and from within, one can dictate any conditions of its own existence: from restrictions on independent foreign policy to requirements on the internal territorial structure fragmentation.

The operational task of the current period, which started in 2019 after the Presidential elections in Ukraine and being solved by the Russian special services, propaganda and the fifth column is a perversely targeted programming of the top state leadership on the peace-making course, creating for such leadership an appropriate informational field and world vision blocking the channels of access to alternative information. The words of the President of Ukraine, heard on the side-lines of the Munich Security Conference 2020 – in my mentality, in my personal culture and in my brain, the war is finished indicate that the enemy is able to achieve this operational goal. This is the result of long-term use of crypto-warfare technologies.

1.1. Crypto-war as it is

In fact, the hybrid war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine was not waged in 2014, but much earlier and it took the form of a crypto-war¹—a hidden war with the use of non-military tools. On February 20, 2014, this war entered a «hot phase» with the use of a force component, the occupation of Crimea by «green men.»

Before that, a crypto-war coordinated from a single center was waged against Ukraine, the main tools of which were:

- the dependence of Ukrainian strategic enterprises on Russian raw materials or components for production;
- introduction of production technologies with mandatory binding to Russian suppliers;
- the dependence of some enterprises on Russian capital through the provision of loans and other financial instruments;
- the entry of Russian capital into Ukrainian enterprises of strategic importance with their subsequent purchase;
- implementation of Russian software and/or corporate IT services with cloud technologies;

¹ Crypto-war is a hidden form of gradual, systematic and long term task of harming the enemy in order to maximize the depletion of its potential by the time, when a decision on aggression of the classical or hybrid type is made (Wars XXI: Russia's Polyhybression. Centre for Global Studies Strategy XXI. Kyiv. 2017. P. 38. URL: <https://geostrategy.org.ua/en/component/k2/item/1561-kniga-viyni-xxi-poligibresiya-rosiyi>).

- purchase of Ukrainian debt securities and concentration of the Ukrainian governmental debts in the Russian entities;
- obtaining commercial and other types of confidential information about the activities of enterprises;
- actions targeted to bring strategic and budget-forming enterprises to bankruptcy;
- introduction of sanctions and restrictions on Ukrainian enterprises in the Russian market;
- introduction of direct and indirect agents of influence in the governing bodies of the Ukrainian strategic state-owned companies, central executive authorities, and the national security and defense sector.

The last listed aspect of crypto-war has been the most typical Russian action towards Ukraine during the entire period since the collapse of the USSR. The goal of this activity is to indirectly transform corporate and state strategies in a particular sector of the economy, security and defense, for the benefit of Russia, through the domestic efforts of the agents of influence. At the present stage, after the change of power in Ukraine in 2019, like in the early 2010s with the coming of V. Yanukovych to power, Russia is mobilizing resistance from within Ukraine to the course of its integration into NATO, using agents of influence.

By definition of Volodymyr Palyvoda², **agents of influence are persons who use their position in society, opportunities, power and authority to promote the interests of a foreign state but without unmasking this state.**

Their actions determine the unwillingness of a victim state to organize an external protection against direct aggression at a

...agents of influence are persons who use their position in society, opportunities, power and authority to promote the interests of a foreign state but without unmasking this state.

critical moment and to provide systemic resistance to various types of hybrid aggression as if from within a country. **The tasks of the Russian agents of influence in Ukraine are to create a hidden system of “management” of the power and transform public opinion and attitudes in Russia’s favour.**

It should be noted that Russian intelligence services paid special attention to members of the Armed Forces and other law enforcement agencies of Ukraine. The collection

² <https://niss.gov.ua/news/statti/agentura-vplivu-yak-instrument-dosyagnennya-geopolitichnikh-ciley-retrospektivnyi>

of information on military personnel of the Ukrainian Navy, Army and Air Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine stationed in Crimea began in 1992. “The Appeal to the people’s deputies of Ukraine made by the Parliamentary Group “Derzhavnist” in connection with the consideration of the bills concerning the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, defense and security of Ukraine by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine” in 1996 stressed: *“The main method of agent work of the GRU and FSB was to infiltrate their agents in the ranks of officers who returned to Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Army, and recruiting military personnel who stayed and stay to serve in the Ukrainian territory <...> The most favorable conditions for the work of Russian secret services’ agents have developed on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula. This region turned out to be the only place outside Russia where the GRU was able to work openly on a legal basis, relying on the intelligence structures of the Black Sea Fleet, which was allegedly in joint Russian-Ukrainian subordination <...> In General, the work of the Russian special services in Crimea was greatly facilitated by the presence of the agents of the KGB Central apparatus, which, due to the specifics of the region (the presence of a large number of party and state summer houses, sanatoriums, rest homes, etc.), was not subject to and was not known to local state security agencies, which later came under the jurisdiction of Ukraine.”*

In parallel, the formation of a powerful network of agents of influence at the highest levels of power was carried out. That culminated in Viktor Yanukovich coming to power. His personnel policy contributed to the movement of agents of influence to the power Olympus. In the context of its crypto-war against Ukraine, the Russian Federation benefits granting preferences through existing or specially initiated business projects to high-level politicians who covertly promote ideas and patronize projects. This has become Russia’s mechanism for forming a ‘fifth column’.

As the experience of Ukraine and Europe shows, corruption schemes are the most effective in forming agents of influence. Russian opposition leader Harry Kasparov gave an apt description

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of the Kremlin’s modern policy: “Europe failed to export democracy to Russia. But Putin managed to export corruption to Europe”; “Russia’s biggest export is not gas or oil, but corruption.” And this corruption contributes to the formation of agents of influence. In Europe, the projects of Russian gas streams - Nord Stream and Nord Stream 2 – serve this purpose. Opaque corruption schemes such as Eural Trans Gas and RosUkrEnergo were successfully implemented by the Kremlin in Ukraine in

the early 2000s in exchange for Kyiv’s rejection of the course for membership in NATO and the EU. However, that worked only to a certain extent. The 2004 Orange Revolution made its own adjustments, and the course for membership in NATO and the EU was restored. It was interrupted again in 2010 after the Yanukovych came to power. However, in 2014, the Revolution of Dignity restored the status quo.

Russian researcher of Russia’s subversive activities abroad, emigrant Dmitry Khmelnytsky points out that an abrupt surge in Russian agents’ activity occurred in 2014. Back then, in addition to existing ones, fictitious public organizations with Moscow roots started to massively multiply around the world. “Their goal was absolutely utilitarian: propaganda support for Russia’s annexation of Crimea. And since then, it has been growing and growing”, he said³.

After the 2019 elections and the coming of Volodymyr Zelenskyy to power with his politically amorphous group of populist-servile types, Russia is making another attempt to destroy Ukraine by crypto-war methods. This time, the Kremlin is using both Russian special service agents, who were barely touched by the counterintelligence activities of 2014-2019, and agents of influence.



³ Khmelnytsky's uprising against Russian agents in the West. Oleg Kudrin. 09.10.2019. URL: <https://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-world/2796302-vosstanie-hmelnickogo-protiv-razrastausejsa-rossijskoj-agentury-na-zapade.html>.

1.2. Agents of Russian influence

Agents of influence are among the most effective and stealthiest ways to influence an enemy. In their environment and within society, an agent of influence is perceived as a loyal citizen. The fact that his/her views, which are expressed in private or in public, are sometimes in line with the propaganda efforts of a foreign state is usually mistaken for coincidence. But the harm caused by an agent of influence can be significant, especially if he/she is an official or a recognized authority.

Due to the turbulent events at the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the complete change of leadership in the national security and defense sector, reasonable conclusions can be made about the high probability of widespread involvement of Russian agents of influence in the state leadership’s top ranks. This influence may have rendered Ukraine unable to resist aggression.

Operations using agents of influence are strategic measures designed for years or even decades after the formation of a society’s collective consciousness, and sometimes require the extinction of an entire generation. In particular, there were three Russian special operations at the strategic level: “Non-Bloc,” “Federalization,” and “Democracy”. The special operation “Non-Bloc” succeeded in 2010 under President Yanukovich, with the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Basic Principles of Foreign and Domestic Policy”. It proclaimed and consolidated the non-aligned status of Ukraine. Based on that, the steps were taken to destroy Ukraine’s defense potential and disorganize the Armed Forces along with the entire security sector.

Long before the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the idea that Russians are a “fraternal people” was propagated in Ukraine, and it followed that war with the Russian Federation is impossible because of the common values and special relations between the countries. Historically, in the armies of both countries there were officers who studied together in the same military schools. They were friends and even relatives. At the beginning of the power stage of the conflict, among the personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine there was no psychological readiness to use weapons. The perception of the Russian Army as a hostile army that killed Ukrainians came only after the direct attacks on the positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine from the territory of the Russian Federation in the summer of 2014. Therefore, it is clear that Russian agents of influence achieved their results.

Also, the escape of the leaders of the defense and security sectors of Yanukovich’s team to Russia actually unmasked their previous activities, and Russia itself. Partially, the information about their activities was made public during the litigation against former President Viktor Yanukovich, who was convicted of absentia of high treason.

A partial list of key officials of law enforcement structures and departments who have been an engine for the interests of Russia and, assumed by some media, its agents in the government and law enforcement agencies of Ukraine, includes:

- Head of the Presidential Administration of Ukraine Andrii Kliuyev (during the presidency of Yanukovich, he was Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, First Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine, and escaped from Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity)⁴;
- First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of Ukraine Andrii Portnov (from April 2010 to the end of February 2014, he held positions in the Administration of President Viktor Yanukovich, and fled Ukraine, but returned after the elections of 2019)^{5 6};
- Deputy Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine Volodymyr Sivkovich (from October 2010 to December 2013, fled Ukraine)⁷;
- Chairman of the State Security Service of Ukraine, member of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, Major-General Oleksandr Yakymenko (January 9, 2013-February 24, 2014; he is hiding in Russia)⁸;
- Counsellor to the President of Ukraine, Colonel-General Igor Kalinin (from January 9, 2013 till February 24, 2014, before that he held the positions of the Chairman of the State Security Service of Ukraine, the Head of the State Security Department of Ukraine; he fled to Russia)⁹;
- First Deputy Chairman of the SSU, Head of the SSU Anti-Terrorist Centre, Major-General Volodymyr Totsky (January 2013-February 2014; he fled to Russia)¹⁰;
- Chairman of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine Hryhoriy Ilyashov (June 18, 2010-February 27, 2014; he escaped from Ukraine)¹¹;

⁴ https://censor.net.ua/news/441963/azarov_i_klyuev_ne_agenty_rf_a_raby_sobstvennost_fsb_pashinskiyi

⁵ <https://myrotvorets.center/criminal/portnov-andrej-vladimirovich/>

⁶ <https://glavcom.ua/country/society/truba-i-portnov-vistupayut-agentami-vplivu-kremlya-advokat-poroshenka-611145.html>

⁷ https://genshtab.info/%D0%A1%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%87_%D0%92%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%BC%D0%B8%D1%80_%D0%9B%D0%B5%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%87

⁸ <https://gordonua.com/news/politics/eks-glava-luganskoy-sbu-petrulevich-v-2000-h-godah-byli-pryamyeperevody-iz-fsb-rf-v-sbu-180250.html>

⁹ <https://focus.ua/politics/332609>

¹⁰ <https://myrotvorets.center/criminal/?cf%5Bname%5D=%D0%A2%D0%BE%D1%86%D1%8C%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B9+%D0%92%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%BC%D0%B8%D1%80&cf%5Bcountry%5D=&cf%5Baddress%5D=&cf%5Bphone%5D=&cf%5Bdesc%5D=>

¹¹ <https://myrotvorets.center/criminal/?cf%5Bname%5D=%D0%98%D0%BB%D1%8C%D1%8F%D1%88%D0%BE%D0%B2+%D0%93%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%B3%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%B9&cf%5Bcountry%5D=&cf%5Baddress%5D=&cf%5Bphone%5D=&cf%5Bdesc%5D=>

- Minister of Defense, Member of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, Member of the Parliament of Ukraine of 3 convocations, Pavlo Lebedev (December 24, 2012-February 27, 2014; he fled to Russia)¹²;
- Ukraine’s Ambassador to Belarus, Vice Admiral Mykhailo Yezhel (2013-2015; before that, when V. Yanukovich was a President, he served as a Counsellor to the President of Ukraine from February 2012 till April 2013, and the Minister of Defense of Ukraine from March 2010 till February 8, 2012)¹³;
- Counsellor to the President of Ukraine Dmytro Salamatin (from December 2012 till February 2014; before that he was Minister of Defense of Ukraine, Director General of the Concern Ukroboronprom; he is hiding in Russia)¹⁴;
- Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Admiral Yurii Ilyin (February 2014; before that he was Commander of the Ukrainian Navy in 2012-2014; as a deserter and collaborator he defected to Russia, and resides in the occupied Crimea now)¹⁵;
- Commander of the Ukrainian Navy Rear Admiral Denys Berezovsky (March 2014, before that he held a position of the Deputy Commander of the Navy for combat training - Head of the Combat Training Department; as a deserter and collaborator he defected to Russia, was appointed Deputy Commander of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation; since 2018, he has served Deputy Commander of the Pacific Fleet of the Russian Federation)^{16 17};
- First Deputy Commander of the Navy – Chief of Staff Rear Admiral Dmytro Shakuro (as a collaborator he defected to Russia and was appointed Deputy Commander of the Caspian Flotilla of the Russian Navy in July 2014)¹⁸;
- First Deputy Commander of the Ukrainian Navy, Chief of the Sevastopol Garrison Vice Admiral Sergii Yeliseyev (as a collaborator he defected to the Russian side after the illegal annexation of Crimea, was appointed Deputy

¹² <https://myrotvorets.center/criminal/lebedev-pavel-valentinovich/>

¹³ <https://svoboda-news.com/svwp/%D0%92%D0%BE%D1%94%D0%BD%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%BA%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%81%D0%BB%D1%83%D0%B6%D0%B1%D1%96-%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D1%96/>

¹⁴ <https://svoboda-news.com/svwp/%D0%92%D0%BE%D1%94%D0%BD%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%BA%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%81%D0%BB%D1%83%D0%B6%D0%B1%D1%96-%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D1%96/>

¹⁵ <https://glavcom.ua/publications/123977-janukovich-kinuv-armiju-proti-narodu-dokumenti-dlja-tribunalu.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/25358689.html>

¹⁷ <https://ua.krymr.com/a/yak-u-krymu-zakhplyuvaly-ostanni-ukrayinskyy-korabel/30449756.html>

¹⁸ <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/29027655.html>

- Commander of the Baltic Fleet of the Russian Navy in the summer of 2014)¹⁹;
- Minister of Internal Affairs, Member of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine General Vitaliy Zakharchenko (he was in office between November 7, 2011 and February 21, 2014; since February 2014, he has been hiding in Russia)²⁰;
 - Deputy Minister of the Internal Affairs, Chief of the Public Security Police Lieutenant-General Viktor Ratushniak (from March 2010 till March 2014; he escaped to Russia)²¹;
 - Deputy Chief of Main Department and Chief of Public Safety Militia of the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in Kyiv, Police Colonel Petro Fedchuk (from July 2013 till January 2014; he fled to Russia; now he is in the Russian Police)²².

As the media informed²³, a significant number of individuals from this list have been criminally convicted as organizers of the Maidan shootings. **The attack on Maidan in February 2014 was a FSB operation to further wreak havoc in Ukraine and to distract the public and authorities y from operation to occupy Crimea and Sevastopol.** This was proved when in April 2020, at the request of Western intelligence services, the SBU detained the former head of the SBU Special Operations Center Major General V. Shaitanov, whose name appeared in two episodes of the events in 2014 in Kiev - arson of the House of Trade Unions and shootings on the Maidan on February 20, and who turned out to be an agent of the FSB of the Russian Federation under the pseudonym “Bobył”, the curator of whom was the FSB colonel Igor Yegorov²⁴.

The level of government positions held by the above-mentioned individuals leads to the conclusion that, **while preparing for aggression against Ukraine, Russia had a near-critical mass of agents of influence, whose activities caused a tempo-**

The attack on Maidan in February 2014 was a FSB operation to further wreak havoc in Ukraine and to distract the public and authorities y from operation to occupy Crimea and Sevastopol.

¹⁹ <https://milnavigator.com.ua/2017/07/25/%D1%87%D0%BE%D0%BC%D1%83-%D1%83%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D1%81%D1%8C%D0%BA%D0%B0-%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BC%D1%96%D1%8F-%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B0-%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BC-%D0%B1%D0%B5/>

²⁰ <https://myrotvorets.center/criminal/zaxarchenko-vitalij-yurevich/>

²¹ <https://tyzhden.ua/News/209358>

²² Ibid.

²³ <https://glavcom.ua/publications/123977-janukovich-kinuv-armiju-proti-narodu-dokumenti-dlja-tribunalu.html>

²⁴ https://glavcom.ua/columns/genn_moskal/ganbi-z-agentom-fsb-yakiy-pracyuvav-u-samomu-serci-sbu-moglo-b-i-ne-buti-673527.html

rary power paralysis. This proved insufficient in conquering Ukraine, but managed to seize part of its territory—Crimea, Sevastopol, and parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.



1.3. Destruction of Ukraine’s defence potential and undermining its defence capability

According to the testimony of the participants in the litigation in ex-President Yanukovich’s case of high treason, the destruction of the Ukrainian Navy began after his election as President. According to the testimony of Commander of the Navy Admiral Igor Teniukh, when Yanukovich came to power in 2010, a personnel sweep was launched in the Armed Forces of Ukraine starting with the Commander of the Navy, the position he held at that time. A month after the dismissal of Admiral Teniukh, the Deputy Commander of the Ukrainian Navy in charge of the coastal defense forces Major-General Oleksandr

While preparing for aggression against Ukraine, Russia had a near-critical mass of agents of influence, whose activities caused a temporary power paralysis. This proved insufficient in conquering Ukraine, but managed to seize part of its territory – Crimea, Sevastopol, and parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Ostrovsky was also dismissed. He refused to sign an order to liquidate separate elite units of the Navy Coastal Defense Forces stationed in Crimea. After that, there were replace-

ments of battalion commanders of the coastal defense forces and commanders of the Navy ships. It was not a coincidence that all of this happened in Crimea and Sevastopol. Pro-Ukrainian officers and commanders were replaced by Pro-Russian ones. The personnel of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in Crimea was also changed. On October 14, 2013, the Navy already reported that there were no conscripts, and the ships and vessels were completed by contractors, who were mainly from Crimea. Commander of the Ukrainian Navy in 2014-2016 Vice Admiral Serhii Haiduk noted that 80% of the Navy personnel were natives of Sevastopol and the ARC at the beginning of the period of Crimean occupation. Given the prevalence of Russian disinformation and propaganda in Crimea, such a decision led to the loss of Crimea, since it weakened Ukraine’s ability to counteract the hybrid threat.

The aforementioned long-term system developments of Russian special services and its local agents were used effectively by Russia in 2014 when the Zero Hour came. Vice Admiral Serhii Haiduk stated: “...There were many examples when the unit commanders, for example, the Commander of the Feodosia Marine Battalion, were told in plain text: “You live at that address, you’ve got a wife at home, and your child goes to that school. Aren’t you afraid for your family? Make the right decision.” “The right decision” meant going over to Russia’s side. Only 3,991 of 13,468 soldiers in Crimea remained loyal to their oath and did not go over to the enemy.

In 2017, Member of the Parliament of Ukraine and Coordinator of the Information Resistance Group Dmytro Tymchuk (already deceased) published statistics on the number of Ukrainian law enforcement employees who defected to the Russian Federation during the occupation of Crimea, and those who remained loyal to Ukraine and went to the mainland after the annexation of the Peninsula by Russia.

On March 1, 2014, the Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine numbered 2,489 military personnel in Crimea. 1,398 military personnel came to the mainland. That is, the percentage of those who defected to Russia was 44%.

As of March 1, 2014, there were 13,468 military personnel (4,637 officers, 8,831 soldiers and sergeants) in the Ukrainian Armed Forces stationed on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula. Only 3,991 (1,649 officers, 2,342 soldiers and sergeants) of them went to the mainland. Thus, 70.4% of the personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine actually defected to the side of the aggressor-country.

As of March 1, 2014, the Security Service of Ukraine in Crimea and Sevastopol counted 1,619 military personnel, including 1,235 officers and 384 contractors in all divisions, agencies and institutions. 217 of them went to the mainland, including

210 officers and 7 contractors. The percentage of traitors in the SSU was the highest among all law enforcement agencies – 86.4%.

These figures are largely the result of HR policies implemented at the level of the Central government, the long-term work of Russian agents in Crimea, and the agents of influence in Kyiv. The Former Representative of the President of Ukraine in the ARC, PhD in law Borys Babin also points out the little-known decision of the Ukrainian authorities of the time of Viktor Yanukovych regarding the functioning of separate SSU divisions. This decision in October-November 2013, before the Revolution of Dignity, terminated the existence of the interregional Directorate of Military Counterintelligence of the SSU in the ARC and the city of Sevastopol, stationed therein. It is obvious that this Department was responsible for the state of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the Crimea and, accordingly, for their ability to counteract the Russian bribery and provocation.

The personnel sweep in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and, especially, in the Navy, was performed personally by Defense Minister Mykhaylo Yezhel, former Commander of the Ukrainian Navy. Two other former Defense Ministers Pavlo Lebedev and Dmytro Salamatin unreasonably reduced the Armed Forces of Ukraine from 180 thousand to 160 thousand people. In 2012, Lebedev announced reduction plans under which the Armed Forces of Ukraine had to be reduced to 60 thousand people by the end of 2015. At the same time, the same Chairs of the Defense Ministry liquidated the military commissariats (recruiting centers).

Another Russian agent Dmytro Salamatin specialized in undermining the position of the Ukrainian defense industry in the world markets of armament and military techniques. In 2010-2012, he was Director-General of the State Concern Ukroboronprom and Minister of Defense from February 8, 2012 till December 24, 2012. According to the message of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine Yuriy Lutsenko dated January 14, 2019, “former Minister of Defense of Ukraine D. A. Salamatin was under the suspicion of the Department of International Legal Cooperation of the GPOU for participation in a criminal organization of Viktor Yanukovych, misappropriation of other property in especially large sizes by abuse of his office and committing treason in the interests of the Russian Federation, undermining the defense capabilities, state and economic security of Ukraine by committing intentional actions aimed at ousting of Ukraine with the world armament markets in favor of Russia. Only the deliberate actions of Salamatin to break the contract between the state-owned enterprise A.A. Morozov Kharkiv Design Bureau for Mechanical Engineering, the State Enterprise Antonov and the state enterprise Progress, from one side, and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Iraq, from another side, for the supply, repair and maintenance of military equipment led to losses of 560 million USD for Ukraine.”

The agents of Russian influence in the defense and security sector of the state have been accused of high treason and can be considered not only agents of influence, but also direct agents of Russian special services. If the state security system functioned in normal conditions, none of them would have been placed into key positions, and some of them would not even receive Ukrainian citizenship. But all this was made possible by a decision at the political level. Agents of influence among politicians deliberately promoted and appointed direct agents of the Russian Federation to key positions and did not interfere with their activities, which were destructive to the national interests of Ukraine. Therefore, the destruction of the state’s security and defense systems was the result of the long-term interactions between the already exposed agents of the aggressor-state and new agents of influence, who acted or continued to act under the cover of legal political and social activity in Ukraine.

A lot of important information was made public during the work of the Temporary Investigative Commission of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to investigate theft in the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the undermining of the state’s defense capabilities in 2004-2017. The striking period of the presidency of V. Yanukovich (2010-2014) was one of the most difficult periods in the Ukrainian Armed Forces’ functioning. The Heads of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine ignored basic provisions in the theory of military art and the experience of previously achieved reforms in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The first stage of that period (2010-2011) was characterized by the disbanding of the Joint Operational Command (JOC) and The Command of the Ukrainian Support Forces. It was proved that the disbanding of the JOC almost destroyed the operational and strategic level of the Armed Forces of Ukraine’s structure and disorganized management of the state defense at the operational and strategic level. The absence of the JOC became one of the main issues of the organization of defense of the territorial integrity of Ukraine in 2014. As a result of the disbanding of the JOC, the Armed Forces of Ukraine were deprived of a military management body that would be able to form joint groups of troops (forces), organize training, plan and successfully conduct operations of the specified groups.

The research found that in early 2014, the mobility of military groups of the Armed Forces at the strategic and operational levels was completely paralysed. In 2014, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine had to hastily form the so-called Anti-Terrorist Operation Headquarters on the territory of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (to some extent it was an analogue of the Joint Operational Command), which acquired operational capabilities to manage a multi-service and interdepartmental grouping of troops already in the course of hostilities.

The Expert Commission concluded that the disbandment of the Command of the Support Forces of the Ukrainian Armed Forces led to the loss of centralized management of the system of comprehensive support and supply for the Armed Forces of Ukraine in peacetime and during preparation and conduct of operations. The lack of the centralized management of the system of logistics and operational support in the future led to disorganization of the provision of troops. This prompted the spontaneous development of a volunteer movement in the initial period of the use of the Armed Forces against illegal armed formations in Donetsk and Luhansk and against the Russian forces in 2014.

The second stage (2012) is characterized by the disorganization of the state’s air defense system of, the revision of the military-administrative division of Ukraine, and groundless changes in the system of mobilization and planning for the transfer of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to the so-called “three-level management system”—which in fact created conditions for a critical imbalance of the control system of the forces during operations. The actions were planned and carried out without considering the requirements of the laws of Ukraine, resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers and other legislative acts. Currently, the structural units of the Ministry of Defense, General Staff, military research institutions and commands of the Armed Forces started a gradual transition to the development of specific interim guidelines for the so-called “legalization” of the decisions of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the Armed Forces Command, which did not conform to the laws of Ukraine, the theory of the military art and the experience of wars and military conflicts. These decisions, made by the Chairs of the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff in 2012, subsequently adversely affected the organization of counteraction to the occupation of Crimea and the Eastern territories of Ukraine.

The creation of a separate operational command in Crimea, which resulted in the transfer of all military units stationed on its territory to the command of the Navy, was disorganizing in nature. That disrupted the functioning of the unified air defense, territorial defense and mobilization control systems, and deprived the commanders of the armed forces of Ukraine of the option to influence the implementation of target tasks for groups of troops (forces) of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the territory of Crimea.

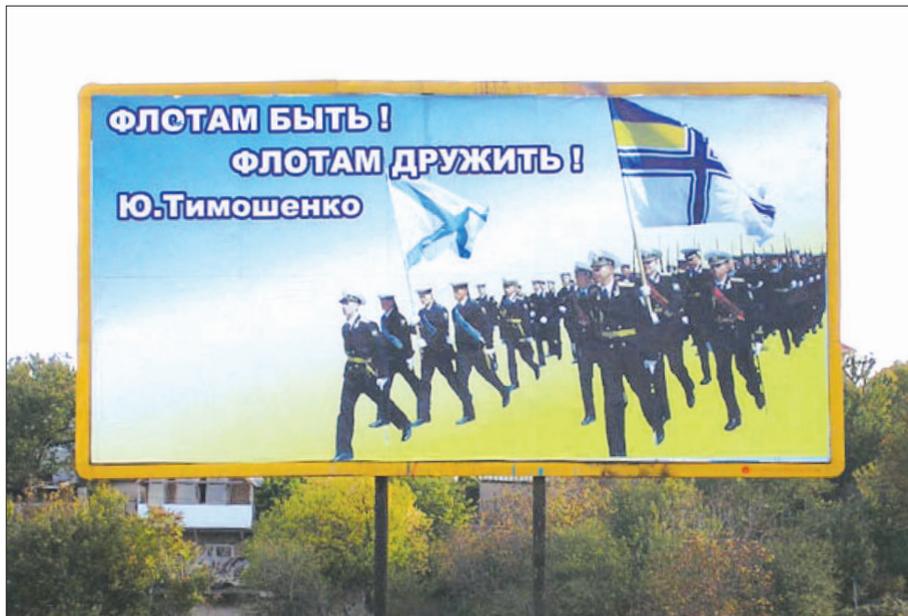
The third stage (2013-2014) is characterized by the completion of the disbandment of the army corps, as the basis for the tactical-level structure of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, disruption of command and control system at all levels - from the brigades to the entire Armed Forces of Ukraine (except for the Air Forces of Ukraine). The third stage of the military system “development” is characterized by an attempt to

artificially distribute the Armed Forces of Ukraine in peacetime into three separate commands made by the organizers of defense planning. They had to be formed according to the interdepartmental and territorial principle, under the leadership of the respective commanders.

In fact, the leadership of the Ministry of Defense during Yanukovich’s Presidency and the leadership of the General Staff adopted and implemented decisions that made a single command center weak. The southern control zone was in Crimea, and in fact, the forces on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula were not subordinate to the Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, but were under the Navy Command. The Eastern zone coincides with what Russian propaganda called “Novorossiya” and was cleared of the main Ukrainian military units in the second half of the 2000s. That zone became easy prey for illegal armed groups, and then for regular units of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Two formations (in Lubny and Artemivsk (Bakhmut) were disbanded, and three brigades were located at a distance of 200 to 500 km from each other (in Chernihiv, Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk regions). This did not allow organizing at least some defence in the Eastern direction. Against the background of such demilitarization, the military storages in Artemivsk (Bakhmut) contained a large number of weapons and military equipment. According to the Kremlin’s plan, they had to be a source of weapons for Russian intelligence and sabotage groups and illegal armed formations to prove the Russian narrative of the “civil war”. The Western zone covered the territory of Western and Central Ukraine.

As a result of Russian agents’ long-term influence both in Kyiv and in Crimea, at the beginning of the Crimean campaign Moscow was confident that Ukraine would not dare to resist the interventionists. To prevent such resistance, a set of measures was carried out, starting from open psychological pressure on the top state leaders to inside actions through various channels of influence on primarily top politicians. This influenced decision-making and led to a virtual paralysis of power.

Published verbatim at the meeting of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine on February 28, 2014, is an eloquent confirmation that the leadership of Ukraine and the leaders of political forces, which were in power after Yanukovich’s escape, held the position of avoiding resistance to the aggressor. That was most clearly shown in the speech of the leader of the parliamentary faction “Batkivshchyna” led by Yulia Tymoshenko, who was present at the meeting of the National Security and Defense Council: “No tank should leave the barracks; no soldier should raise their weapons, because this will mean losing. No martial law and activation of our troops! We must become the most peaceful nation on the planet, and just behave like the doves of peace...”



The phrase on the poster: “The fleets must exist! The fleets must cooperate!” – Y. Tymoshenko.

Former Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Colonel-General Volodymyr Zamana, in his reflections on February 29, 2020, noted: “If the SSU declassified all agents of influence of the FSB in Ukraine, and especially among those who held the highest state positions, we would see a reason why the NSDC made that decision then.”

1.4. Relegalization of agents of influence

The lustration mechanism introduced during the presidency of Petro Poroshenko was extremely imperfect and it was criticized from different sides. According to the Law of Ukraine “On Lustration”, meant the prevention of participation in governance for those who, by their decisions, actions, or omissions contributed to the implementation of measures aimed at the usurpation of power by Viktor Yanukovych, blasting bases of national security and defense of Ukraine, and the unlawful violation of the rights and freedoms of individuals. The law introduced a ban on holding certain positions for 10 years by persons who, in the period from February 25, 2010 (the beginning of the presidency of Yanukovych) until February 22, 2014, held certain public positions for a period of a year or more. The application of this imperfect law did not lead to a significant cleansing of power.

After the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2019, when a new power configuration was formed in Ukraine with an extremely low level of professionalism, loss of institutional memory, and favoritism in the selection of personnel, the conditions were set for the re-legalization of agents of influence and their penetration into

If the SSU declassified all agents of influence of the FSB in Ukraine, and especially among those who held the highest state positions, we would see a reason why the NSDC made that decision then.

the authorities. A certain number of fugitives of the Yanukovich regime returned to Ukraine. Persons who held responsible positions and lost them due to lustration were ap-

pointed to new positions in state agencies. A striking example is the appointment of a new Head of Economic Crime Combating Department in the SSU (must generally be eliminated in the reform of the SSU)—Major-General Anatoly Kaluzhniak, who among other heads of the Security Service was accused of involvement in the FSB-guided Maidan shootings in February 2014. The former Chair of the Security Service of Ukraine Valentin Nalyvaichenko noted that there were grounds to believe that groups of Russian FSB employees participated in the planning and implementation of the so-called “anti-terrorist operation” in Kyiv during mass protests in February 2014. The FSB of the Russian Federation admitted that its employee Major-General Sergei Beseda was in Kyiv on February 20-21. Kaluzhniak denies the charges. However, the fact that a person with a poor reputation and an unclear past was appointed to a responsible position in the SSU when he did not have to be appointed is indicative. According to media reports, he “coincidentally” turned out to be a long-time friend of Zelenskyy from school. Therefore, he was appointed to the SSU.

The former Secretary of the National Security Council of Ukraine, Academician Volodymyr Horbulin warned about it in 2019, shortly before the start of the election campaigns, clearly fully justifies. **“The danger is that among potential candidates for a President and future candidates for MPs there are obvious or latent agents of Russian influence, for whom Russia is trying to create the required conditions for victory,”** he noted in his article.

This is reflected in the post-electoral public activation of some politicians and officials of the Pro-Russian regime at the time of Yanukovich. According to the authors, former Deputy Head of the APU A. Portnov, ex-Minister of Justice O. Lucash and a former MP O. Bondarenko symbolize a Pro-Russian and anti-Western policy, disguised as concern for national interests and an attempt to influence the administration of V. Zelenskyy to persuade him to capitulate to Russia and turn Ukraine

geopolitically to Russia. As a rule, the media and political activity of Pro-Russian activists are carried out under the aegis of the Opposition Platform, headed by Yuri Boyko, Minister in M. Azarov’s Government, and the proxy platform “Ukrainskyi Vybir”, chaired by Viktor Medvedchuk. The Ukrainsky Vybir promotes the idea of the “real people power” through the adoption of the lobbied by them Law On All-Ukrainian and Local Referendums on People’s Initiative, the federal structure of Ukraine, changing the vector of foreign economic integration and the resumption of trade and economic cooperation with the Russian Federation and the CIS countries.

The immutability of the Russian priorities in the crypto-war against Ukraine within the country is also evidenced by the fact that the idea of direct democracy continued to advance after the change of the

The danger is that among potential candidates for a President and future candidates for MPs there are obvious or latent agents of Russian influence, for whom Russia is trying to create the required conditions for victory.

leadership in Ukraine in 2019. Only its provider has changed. Now it is the leadership of the Parliament, forming a corresponding package of the bills. In other words, all their tasks are included in the system of the above-mentioned three Russian special operations at the strategic level – “Non-Bloc”, “Federalization” and “People’s Power”, the purpose of which is to dilute Ukraine, the dysfunction of its power, and transformation of the country into a zone of chaos in Europe, and this has been actualized and pushed through by the agents of influence in the Parliament. Only the sequence of actions has been changed. At the time of President Yanukovych, the law “On the basics of internal and foreign policy” was adopted in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and the law fixed the non-bloc status of Ukraine. On the contrary, when Poroshenko was a President, Russia tried to federalize Ukraine. Later, while Zelenskyy is a President, the bet was made on pushing “direct people power” to solve positively for Russia the issue of Ukraine’s rejection of the European and Euro-Atlantic integration courses, and the transformation of the country from a unitary to a federal one, and in fact an amorphous confederation. A number of political and public organizations and associations represent the public roof of the activities of agents of influence, and media resources controlled by certain Russian oligarchic groups serve as a platform for mass misinformation and manipulation of the proposed major changes in legislation that can lead to the dismantling of the Ukrainian state.

1.5. Some conclusions

The best way to protect the state from the activities of agents of influence is a consistent and systematic unmasking of any detected manipulation, and providing citizens constant access to reliable information. Agents of influence do not steal state secrets like intelligence agencies, but instead they influence public opinion and consequently impact political decisions. Therefore it is difficult for counterintelligence agencies to collect evidence that could be presented in a court. An agent of influence can also impact political decision-making in the role of counsellor, expert, public activist or accuser journalist. In all these cases, he/she acts indirectly. And it is also possible to indirectly counteract its activities (counterintelligence) through public unmasking and refutation by other representatives of the professional environment, state or non-state organizations.

It is much more difficult to counteract the destructive activities of direct agents. They make managerial decisions on their own behalf, but usually under opaque political cover, and sometimes under direct political guidance. Therefore, counterintelligence work against them is rather complicated because of political influences. Mature states with strong counterintelligence agencies virtually do not allow direct foreign agents, especially from hostile states, to penetrate the political level. In Ukraine the situation is different. We've witnessed a whole galaxy of direct Russian agents and its gradual penetration, first in Ukrainian society, then in public space and the parliamentary hall, and finally in top government positions in national security and defense. But such operations are not fast; they require time for implementation and deployment, they demand means and resources. Recovering mass consciousness from aggression also does not happen quickly; it is also an inertial system. Such strategic-level operations are initiated at the moment of a democratic change of power in the victim country. It is at this time that both Russian agents of influence and direct agents of the special services of the aggressor-country can appear through the mechanism of elections and waves of appointments at the political level. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully monitor the appointments in the field of national security and defense, and remember that all agents will not show themselves immediately. It is important that they appear ahead of the game because this would destroy the strategic plans of the special services to use them. A good method of de-masking can be an open game on the part of the civil society: direct questions, maximum truth, and an unbiased presentation of facts. When an agent of Russian influence realizes that he is unmasked, he either curtails all activities or openly switches to the pro-Russian political camp.

Ideally, a broad information campaign must be launched to protect society from Russian influence through public awareness of Russian agents’ activities. **Civil society organizations should develop and implement internal ethical rules and procedures for their activities aimed at preventing the aggressor’s agents from using them to increase internal influence in Ukraine or destabilize the situation.**

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2. FEEDING BUSINESS SCHEMES OF RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN UKRAINE

2.1. Energy doping

2.1.1. RUE Group

As already noted, the most typical actions in forming a systemic long-term influence on the country’s policy are the explicit or implicit preferences in business granted to those politicians who promote ideas beneficial to the leadership of the Russian Federation. In 2005-2012, the most striking example was the Group of Firtash-Boyko-Lyovochkin – RosUkrEnergo Group. It gained control over the gas market, a significant part of the chemical industry, the titanium industry, and the assets in the media. Corruption of top state officials in energy resources supply schemes is an effective mechanism for influencing them. It creates appropriate dependencies, through which the adoption of certain decisions at the state level to form the country’s foreign and internal policy can be influenced.

After 2014, when Dmytro Firtash came to the focus of attention of the American justice system and was restricted in freedom of movement in Austria, and after Ukraine stopped Russian gas imports in November 2015, the channels of RUE influence ceased to be effective in promoting Russian influence on the top state leadership of Ukraine. However, Firtash’s group still has a significant business potential. His Group DF consolidated the assets in the gas distribution sector, buying regional gas distribution companies in Ukraine. They operate under the Regional Gas Company LLC (RGC) brand. However, the key role belongs to Gaztech PJSC, a private joint-stock company established in 2005. Five legal entities own five or more per cent of shares in Gaztech: four Cypriots companies include Porala Venchers Limited (24%), Pasler Enterprises Limited (15%), Nesiba Venchers Limited (24%), and Krezer Holdings Limited (24%). The fifth one is Amset LLC (9%) from Kyiv. Gaztech’s main activities are business management and business and management consulting.

Gaztech PJSC owns the stakes in Lvivgaz PJSC, Mykolaivgaz PJSC, Ivano-Frankivskgaz PJSC, Sevastopolgaz PJSC, Dnipropetrovskgaz PJSC, Zaporizhgz PJSC, Luhanskgaz PJSC, Vinnytsiagaz PJSC, Chernivtsigaz PJSC, Volyngaz PJSC, Zhytomyrgaz PJSC, Tysmenytsiagaz PJSC, Sumyngaz PJSC, Krymgaz PJSC, and Khmelnytskygaz PJSC²⁵.

²⁵ <http://gaztek.prat.ua/>

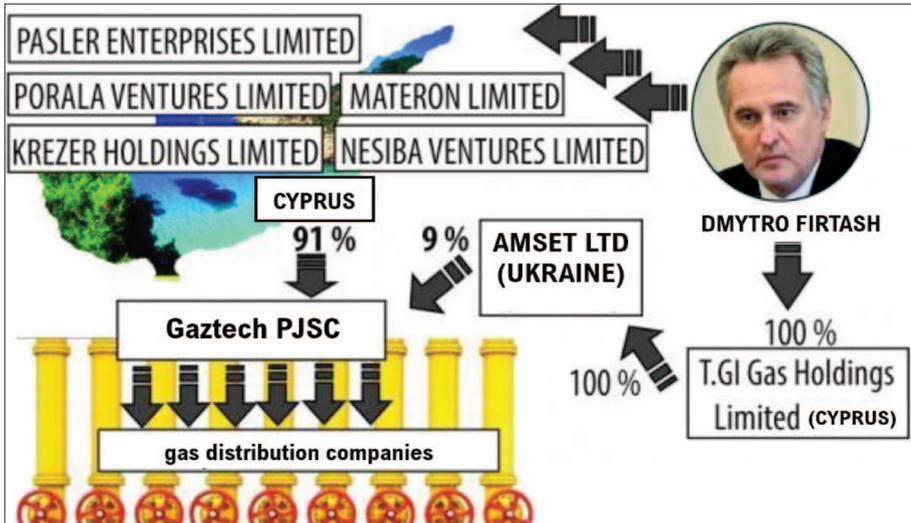


Fig. 1. Offshore scheme of the Gaztech's property.

Gaztech had three employees. The Regional Gas Company (RGC) is engaged in management consulting in the gas distribution sector. Twenty gas distribution companies operate under the RGC brand²⁶. The ultimate beneficiary of both companies is D. Firtash²⁷.

He also has dominant position in the chemical industry of Ukraine. His lobbying potential has allowed him maintaining a scheme of supplying strategically important for the Russian defence industry ilmenite raw materials from Ukrainian sources through primary processing facilities and production of titanium dioxide in occupied Crimea. It is despite Russian aggression and bypassing sanctions. Due to this, the largest Russian producer of titanium products, the metallurgical VSMPO-AVISMA, continued supplies to the leading manufacturer of armaments and military equipment of the Russian Federation – Rostech Corporation.

2.1.2. MedvedChekists

Viktor Medvedchuk and his entourage receive the primary attention from Russia. These political and business groups are gradually gaining influence in the largest opposition force and have increased their media assets. Because of the sanctions

²⁶ <https://104.ua>

²⁷ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2017/05/25/7144986/>, https://zn.ua/energy_market/kak-v-ukrainegazom-torguyut-.html, <https://www.epravda.com.ua/rus/publications/2016/04/5/588187/>

imposed against him by the United States V. Medvedchuk almost does not own any business personally. His wife Oksana Marchenko and long-time partner Taras Kozak have a fairly powerful business, which would be impossible without the assistance of the Russian leadership.



The authorized capital of the companies, which are directly or indirectly associated with the family circle of V. Medvedchuk, today amounts to about UAH 3 billion. According to the media, this circle includes Ukrcapital, Sport-tour, Terra-Invest, Harmony, Galician Agricultural Company, Landras-Agro, Galagrobusiness MZ, Galychyna-Organic and PSP Oscar, MBK Agrotechnika and others. The activities of half a dozen companies are questionable. A number of agricultural firms, in particular Galician Agricultural Company, Landras-Agro, Galagrobusiness MZ, Galichina-Organic and PSP Oscar have the signs of fictitious and seem established for the sake of tax evasion. It is important that these companies “swallowed” significant amounts from other business structures of the family circle.

To create a business chain for funding of the Pro-Russian forces in Ukraine, Moscow decided to use the supply of petroleum products, since 4/5 of their consumption is provided by imports from Russia and Belarus. Therefore, since 2014, the shares of five Russian companies, including Novoshakhtinsky Petroleum Plant, Trade Oil Refinery, South Energo, NZNP Trading House and Rosewood Shipping are owned by the Cyprus offshore Ventolor Investment Limited. The final beneficiary is hidden behind a chain of offshore companies. According to media conclusions, the final beneficiary is Oksana Marchenko, the wife of V. Medvedchuk.

Novoshakhtinsky Petroleum Plant in the Rostov region cannot be called the largest player in the industry, but its revenues have grown steadily in the last few years. For example, at the end of 2017, net profit increased by 3.6 times. In that year, all five companies, co-owned by offshore companies close to Medvedchuk and Kazak, earned 6 billion rubles in total. The plant also received subsidies from the local authorities of the Rostov region.

O. Marchenko is the sole owner of the Cyprus-based Tumillon Investments Ltd., which through other Cypriot companies owns 51.1% stake in the Russian NZNP Trade. The latter won a competition for the right to produce oil at the Gavrikovske field in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District. Its estimated reserves exceeded 40 million tons. It is important that in the competition for oil production at this field, the private NZNP Trade bypassed the state Rosneft due to its conditions. According to them, only companies from the Rostov region could participate in the competition. And in this area, there was only one firm - NZNP Trade. It is unlikely that such a competition could take place without approval from the top leadership of the Russian Federation. The co-founder of NZNP Trade is Natalia Lavreniuk, who is considered a civil wife of Deputy of the Verkhovna Rada Taras Kozak.

In 2015, the Swiss International Trading Partners AG obtained control over PrykarpatZakhidTrans oil product pipeline for the least expensive and most commercially profitable pipeline supply of diesel fuel to Ukraine. The acquisition of the asset could not be carried out without approval at the highest level in Moscow, as its owner was a Russian state-owned operator of the oil transportation system - Transneft. At the time, Transneft gained control over the Ukrainian asset, which was acquired after the collapse of the USSR. Back in 2014, the PrykarpatZakhidTrans pipeline was the property of the state of Ukraine. However, in 2015, Transneft obtained control over the pipeline through the court. The Antimonopoly Committee approved the acquisition. In the fall of 2016, the pipeline was commissioned. For this, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine bought old and low-quality diesel fuel in the pipe, so that the owners of the pipeline could transport new fuel from Russia via the pipeline. Immediately after the purchase of the oil pipeline, Russia lifted the embargo on the supply of diesel fuel to Ukraine. Later in 2019, PrykarpatZakhidTrans came under the control of the Belarusian Neftebitumen Plant, which became the owner of 51% of the shares of PrykarpatZakhidTrans. The remaining 49% were held by the Swiss International Trading Partners (48%) and 1% - by Anatoly Schaefer, who manages it.

In 2016, the Swiss company Glusco Energy S. A. bought Rosneft's network of gasoline stations in Ukraine. Rosneft owned a network of 141 gasoline stations in 12 regions of Ukraine that previously belonged to TNK-BP. Glusco Energy S. A. was

affiliated to the Swiss oil trader Proton Energy Group. The Director of Proton Energy Group S. A. and Glusco Energy S. A. is the same person - Nisan Moiseev. Information about the final beneficiaries of these companies is not disclosed. However, given the friendly relations between Moiseev and Medvedchuk, one can assume that they come from the latter's surrounding. Glusco Energy was created specifically for retail. It registered a subsidiary company in Ukraine, Glusco Energy Ukraine, which entered the domestic market a year later. Deliveries from Russia in 2018 provided 40% of the Ukrainian diesel fuel market - 2.6 million tons.

Taras Kozak is also a minority owner of the scandalous tobacco monopoly in the distribution of cigarettes - Tedis Ukraine (previously called Megapolis). Control over the shares in Tedis was provided through a chain of two Cypriot firms - Havanor Management Limited and Turul Investments Limited. According to public data, Tedis Ukraine is known not only by the fact that during Yanukovych times it acquired a monopoly on the supply of cigarettes in Ukraine, but also by the fact that one of the majority owners from Russia is Igor Kesaev, who simultaneously owns a small arms plant in Kovrov and is a supplier for the Russian Armed Forces.

Medvedchuk's encirclement is also present in the supply of coal from the occupied territories. Thus, in 2014, the list of coal suppliers from the occupied areas of Donbas to the TPPs of Centrenergo PJSC included the Hong Kong-registered company Arida Global Ltd., which is associated with Medvedchuk.

Additionally, an important business segment was the sale of liquefied natural gas, becoming increasingly popular in Ukraine. At the end of 2016, traditional importers of liquefied gas started to experience problems. Due to the actions of the SSU, the Ministry of Economic Development and the Customs, its import was stopped. At the same time, there were firms that started the import of large volumes of liquefied gas from Russia. Experts note that the actions of the SSU were synchronized with the actions of the Russian control authorities. The Customs Service together with the SSU put pressure on liquefied gas importers. In Russia, the Federal Export Control Service has identified Proton, a subsidiary of Glusco, as a single exporter of Rosneft's resources. After that, LNG shipments from 4 companies, which had not previously been seen importing large volumes of liquefied gas, were placed on the Ukrainian Energy Exchange. They were Glusco Ukraine, Creative Trading, Wexler Global LP (UK) and Gikka Limited (British Virgin Islands). All four companies offered liquefied gas produced by Rosneft to Ukrainian consumers.

Despite strong political and media support from Moscow, in 2019, attempts to restore gas business with Gazprom and simultaneous imposition of the Russian vision of the transit contract and the future of Ukraine's GTS ended by the failure of Kremlin's and Medvedchuk-Boyko puppet political tandem.

Visits of the leadership of the political party Opposition Platform - For Life (Ukr: Опозиційна платформа - За життя) to Russia, meetings with A. Miller, D. Medvedev and V. Putin and the fake “gas talks”²⁸, even not authorized, could have a completely different purpose. It was possible that they tried to help Gazprom to save the funds, which it had to pay to Naftogaz according to the decisions of the Stockholm Arbitration, and convert them into gas supplies to Ukraine under a profitable business scheme that should have become a legal basis for long-term funding of political forces.

If we analyze the creation and development of the Opposition Platform – For Life (OPZZh), we can reasonably assume that a significant part of the resources, obtained under the schemes described above, were used for the activities of this particular political force. In addition, the implementation of the above-mentioned schemes, besides direct economic damage, significantly undermines the economic potential of Ukraine itself, from the economic security standpoint.



The less noticeable, but persistent activity of another MP of several convocations of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Andrii Derkach, a graduate of the Academy of the Ministry of Security of the Russian Federation in 1993 and the author of a thesis “Organizing and conducting meetings with secret agents” – is also striking. His activity in Ukraine at various times was associated with both the armament business and

²⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/yuriy.vitrenko/posts/10156706175123458>.http://zagittya.com.ua/news/novosti/lidery_opozicionnoj_platfomy_1_za_zhizn_proveli_vstrechu_s_premierministrom_rf_dmitriem_medvedevym_i_rukovodstvom_edinoj_rossii_.html

the media sphere. It has also been related to the energy sector, starting with the oil transshipment in Odesa and ending with Energoatom NNEC and Ukratomprom State Concern, which he chaired in 2006-2007, combining the duties in the company with parliamentary activities.

The political trajectory of A. Derkach has passed through various political forces. However, at one or another level, they were connected with the “parties at power.” This once again indicates the intention to influence the certain decisions. Energoatom NNEC is now the focus of attention for A. Derkach’s group in terms of delegating people from his inner circle to the company. According to the algorithm of the agents’ work, they must ensure the necessary transformation of the state-owned company towards its cooperation with Russia. In particular, this is done to minimize the procurement of nuclear fuel from an alternative supplier (Westinghouse Company) and restore the status quo of a monopoly supplier for Russian TVEL company.



Now there is an increased activity of MPs’ group, seeking to change the legislation of Ukraine and restrict the participation of the foreign citizens in the supervisory boards. First of all, this relates to Naftogaz of Ukraine NJSC, which has painfully stricken the Russian Gazprom in the International Arbitration in Stockholm, demanding from the Russian company almost 3 billion USD. In fact, this achievement of the Ukrainian company became possible due to the change in the corporate governance system and the emergence of a Supervisory Board with independent Directors. The bill “On

amendments to certain legislative acts on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for citizens in regard to representation in supervisory boards and management bodies of the state unitary enterprises, companies and state banks and fair formation and effective operation of such supervisory boards taking into account the national interests of Ukraine” appeared in March 2020 in the Ukrainian Parliament upon submission of A. Derkach and O. Dubinsky. The appearance of such bill can probably be seen as a reaction of the pro-Russian parliamentary lobby to the February statements of the Naftogaz management on the preparation of new multi-billion-dollar lawsuits against Gazprom, which, among other, includes compensation for losses of Naftogaz due to Gazprom actions in the RosUkrEnergO scheme. All this reflects the desire of both the Russian monopolist and its Ukrainian lobbyists (the RUE Group) to strike Naftogaz from within with the hands of the agents of influence and at least to block the appearance of the new claims in the Stockholm Arbitration. At most it aims to completely change the management of the state company to be loyal to Gazprom, as it was before the reform in the gas sector in 2015, which became possible only after the Revolution of Dignity.

Thus, one can conclude that a revanchist attack on the state-owned enterprises aimed at restoration of control over them by pro-Russian groups and the dependence of the Ukrainian energy industry on Russia, as well as isolation of the national companies from cooperation with American and European partners, is currently seen in the national energy sector.

2.2. Financial injector

2.2.1. Direct Russian investment in Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity

The activity of Russian capital in Ukraine during 2014-2019 occurred in conditions of high political risks, which abruptly increased after the occupation and annexation of Crimea by Russia and Russian invasion in Donbas. In this regard, political lobbying has become an integral element of the management strategy of Russian capital in Ukraine seeking to hold positions, minimize damages and pushing its interests forward.

In General, the presence of Russian capital in Ukraine has significantly reduced in the five years

...a revanchist attack on the state-owned enterprises aimed at restoration of control over them by pro-Russian groups and the dependence of the Ukrainian energy industry on Russia, as well as isolation of the national companies from cooperation with American and European partners, is currently seen in the national energy sector.

that passed after the Revolution of Dignity. At the same time, this retreat was accompanied by a strategic regrouping into positions that allow more or less successful manoeuvring, especially based on the lobbying opportunities in Ukraine. In addition to the classical lobbying tools, the deficiencies of the political and legislative field of Ukraine (including lobbying sphere itself) allow Russian entities getting the maximum benefits and influences with limited resources. Thriving corruption and incompetence at many levels of the state power, especially after the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2019, forms an especially favourable ground for this.

The influence of Russian financial interests on the Ukrainian banking and financial sphere today is determined not so much by their specific weight in the economic system of Ukraine, but by the direction of their application. The effect of financial activity is multiplied by its connection with politics and its organizational capabilities. The financial influence of Russia on the Ukrainian banking and financial system is carried out, in particular, through:

- the channels of influential Ukrainian industry lobbies, which additionally benefit from the specifics of the industry distribution of financial transactions of Russian entities in Ukraine, including the financial sector;
- the balancing policies of financial institutions, in particular the concentration of assets in the currency and interbank segments of the financial market;
- combination of financial and political capital, and stimulation of political activity of the main beneficiaries of pro-Russian financial and economic institutions of Ukraine;
- pressure on the financial authorities due to the expanded presence in the financial and investment sphere of Ukraine.

In the first quarter of 2019, at the peak of the presidential campaign in Ukraine, Russia dramatically strengthened its positions as one of the leading investors in the financial and insurance sector of Ukraine, after only Austria and Cyprus. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the volume of Russian investment in this sector reached USD 403.5 million before 01.04.2019. It amounted to about 10.4% of all foreign investment in this sector. In the Q1 2019, the share of Russian investments in the finance and insurance sector in Ukraine increased from 48.8% to 58.1% of the total investments of Russian entities in Ukraine (Fig. 2).

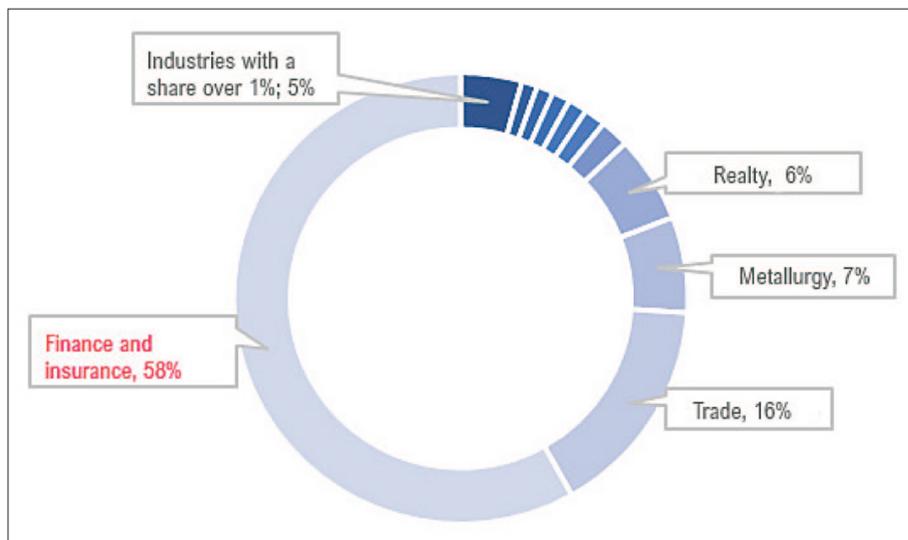


Fig. 2. Focus of Russian investments in Ukraine as of 01.04.2019.

Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine

Due to the strict regulation of capital withdrawal from Ukraine by the National Bank of Ukraine, the focus was on the impact of foreign investment in Ukraine. However, the specifics of capital withdrawal from Ukraine through the direct investment channel attract special attention. In this regard, the predominant areas of Ukrainian investment capital withdrawal were, first of all, Cyprus, then Russia. Additionally, there is a certain correlation between the withdrawal of investment funds from Ukraine to Cyprus, the volume of funds withdrawal from the Donetsk region, and the volume of funds withdrawal from the professional scientific and technical sphere (science, research and development), which can be clearly seen in the Table 1.

Table 1. Direct investment from Ukraine at the beginning of the period, billion USD

Direction	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	01.04.19
Total from Ukraine	5,8	6,4	6,4	6,6	6,7	6,5	6,3	6,3	6,3	6,3	6,3
To Cyprus	5,3	5,9	5,9	5,9	5,9	5,9	5,9	5,9	5,9	5,9	5,9
To Russia	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,3	0,4	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,1
From the Donetsk region	5,4	6,0	5,9	6,0	6,0	5,9	5,9	5,9	5,9	0,0	5,9
From the sphere of NDD	5,3	5,9	5,9	5,9	6,0	6,0	6,0	6,0	6,0	6,0	6,0

Source: State Statistic Service of Ukraine.

2.2.2. Russian investments in the financial sector of Ukraine

In general, the events of 2014 marked the beginning of a long-term trend of the Russian capital reduction in the financial sector of Ukraine. Russian direct investment in this sector decreased from USD 2.7 billion in early 2014 to about USD 300 million in early 2019 (Fig. 3). Accordingly, Russia’s share of total foreign investment in this sector decreased from 22.3% to 8.0%.

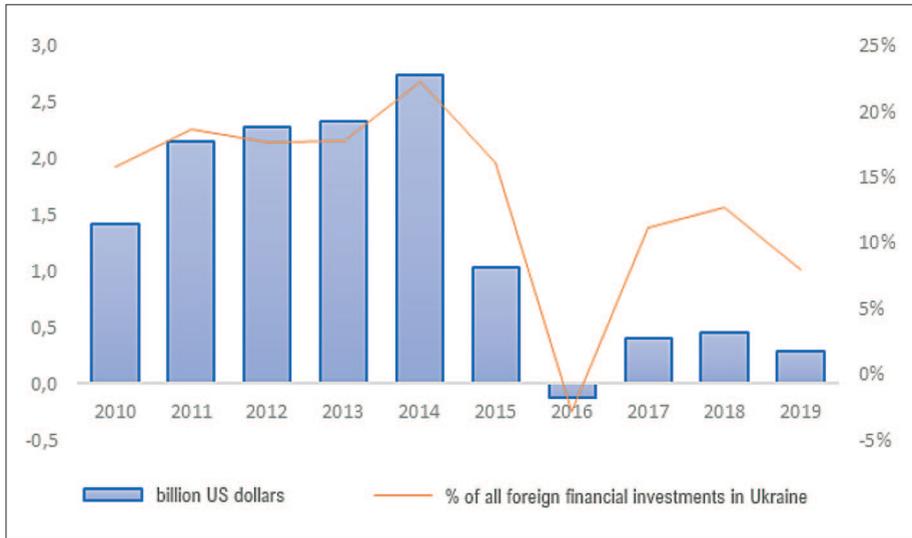


Fig. 3. Share of Russian capital in foreign investments in the financial sector of Ukraine, at the beginning of the period.

Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine

Despite this long-term trend, investment in the financial sector remained an important priority for Russian capital in Ukraine. From 2010 to 2014, investments in the financial sector of Ukraine exceeded 77% of all direct investments of Russian companies in the country. After 2014, with the exception of 2015, despite the rapid withdrawal from Ukraine, Russian financial capital still levelled to above 55% of all Russian direct investment in Ukraine, and remained the most organized sector of Russian capital in Ukraine. This trend continued in 2019 and even increased. Russian capital operations have become even more concentrated in the banking and financial sector. Due to this its share among all Russian investments in the Ukrainian economy grew from 48.7% at the beginning of the year to 62.6% at the end of 2019 year (Fig. 4).

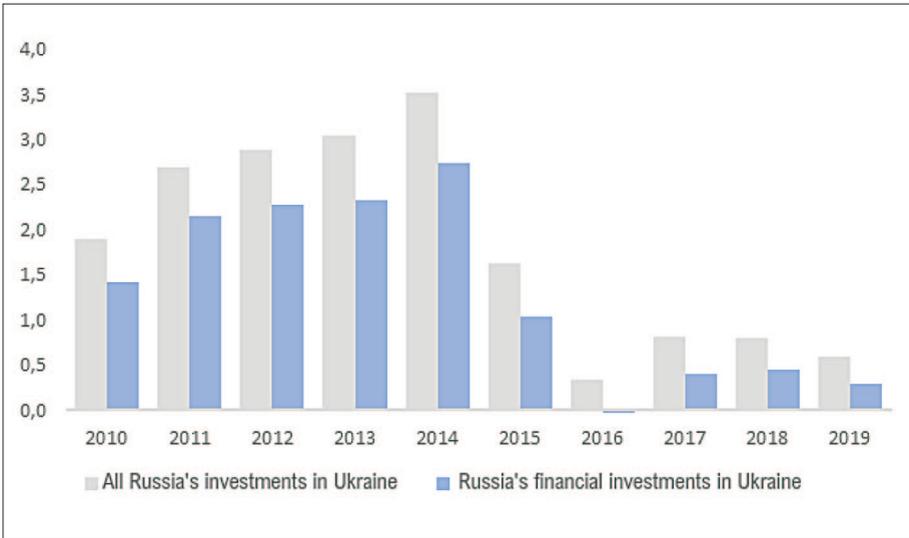


Fig. 4. Share of the Russian direct investments in the financial sector of Ukraine, \$ bln.
 Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine

According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, at the end of the Q1 2019, Russian investment has already accounted for almost 10.4% of all foreign investment in the financial sector, increasing by 2% in the Q1 of 2019. On 01.04.2019, 58.1% of all Russian investments in Ukraine in the amount of USD 403.5 million were concentrated in this segment.

It should be noted that as of 31.12.2018, according to the State Statistics Service, Russian investments in the financial and insurance sector of Ukraine amounted to USD 690.2 million, which was almost 20% of all foreign investments in this sector. **Thus, during the presidential campaign in Ukraine, starting in early 2019, Russian players withdrew about USD 280 million from the banking and financial sector of Ukraine. Given the frozen transfers to Russia or transfers to the parent companies during the election campaign in Ukraine, the probability of these funds conversion into political funding lobbying Russian interests was high. In other words, the withdrawn capital could have become a political investment. An indirect confirmation of this assumption was the short-term dynamics of Russia’s financial investments in Ukraine at the start of the election period. Just before the presidential race in Ukraine, in the Q4 2018, the volume of direct Russian investment in the banking and insurance sector of Ukraine increased by about USD 250 million.**

The volume of investments withdrawn from the financial sphere in January 2019 almost coincided with the mentioned figure. These funds could have been safely dissolved in the Ukrainian market during the election campaign. After a short-term surge in the Q4 2018, the volume of Russian direct investment in this area returns to its previous level at the end of Q1 2019 before the end of the presidential marathon (Fig. 5).

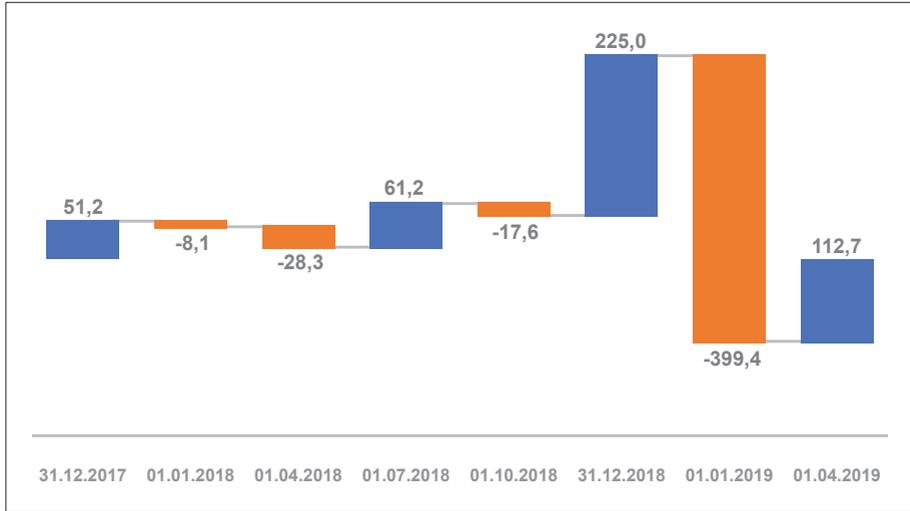


Fig. 5. Changes in the dynamics of Russian investments in the financial sector of Ukraine during the presidential campaign, 01.01.2018-01.04.2019, \$ million.

Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine

Notes:

01.07.2018: actual start of the main forces’ mobilization before elections

01.10.2018: completion of mobilization and preparation of participants to elections

01.01.2019: official start of the presidential campaign

2.2.3. Activities of Russian banks in Ukraine

After 2014, half of the banks with Russian capital left the Ukrainian market, including the Russian state-owned VTB Bank (with a total asset of UAH 26 billion) in December 2018. As of 01.04.2019, seven banks operating in Ukraine had the end beneficiaries who, in one or another way, are citizens or subjects of the Russian Federation. Two of these banks have state funding – a subsidiary of Sberbank of the Russian Federation and Prominvestbank PJSC (Vnesheconombank of Russia). One – Alfa-Bank – is a private multinational Corporation. There is also a First In-

vestment Bank in Ukraine, which is 88% owned by a Russian citizen. However, the National Bank of Ukraine does not classify it as a Bank of foreign groups. Finally, this analysis includes UNEX Bank. Despite the Ukrainian citizenship of its beneficiary, the oligarch and Deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Vadym Novinsky, it could still be classified as a Russian agent, due to his active pro-Russian position and his recent Russian citizenship.

Today, Alfa-Bank Ukraine (excluding Ukrspotsbank) is the absolute asset leader among the banks with Russian capital in Ukraine. Combined assets of Alfa-Bank and Ukrspotsbank put this group on the fourth place in terms of assets in the banking system of Ukraine, and on the first, with a large margin, place among non-state banks and banks with foreign capital in the country. Alfa-Bank, despite an active information campaign aimed at separating itself from Russian geopolitics, is still deeply intertwined with Russia. Moreover, the Bank’s PR positioning ultimately looks like misinformation: due to the concealment of Russian citizenship behind the screen of dual citizenship, only about 30% of the institution’s shares are attributed to Russian capital in the Bank’s messages, instead of almost 90% of real control by “the citizens of the aggressor state”. Exactly the same manipulation occurs for Ukrspotsbank, acquired by Alfa-Bank in 2016.

The specific positions of some Ukrainian banks, which ultimate beneficiaries actively promote Russian interests in Ukraine under the guise of Ukrainian citizenship, are also worth noting. The most striking expression of this strategy of the Russian lobby is demonstrated by the sole shareholder of UNEX Bank, a former citizen of Russia, and now a Deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Vadym Novinsky. This businessman actively sponsors the activities of the controversial Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine and the pro-Russian Opposition Bloc. This double position is especially spread in the activities of small banks with a regional bias in Ukraine.



At the end of 2018, five out of fifteen loss-making banks registered in Ukraine had Russian capital (Table 2). The total losses of the banking system amounted to UAH 18.3 billion, of which UAH 12.3 billion were incurred by banking institutions with

Russian capital. Thus, almost 70% of the losses of the Ukrainian banking system were of Russian origin. They were generated by three large banks with Russian capital:

- Sberbank of Russia – UAH 7.6 billion;
- Prominvestbank – UAH 3.3 billion;
- Ukrasotsbank – UAH 1.2 billion.

The negative results of Russian banks dramatically contrast the effective performance of almost all foreign banks operating in Ukraine (with the exception of PRAVEX Bank), which average return on operations was 36%. It should be noted that such an exceptional loss is actually equivalent to a hidden subsidy or bribery of clients, who are beneficiaries of Russian banks’ services.

Table 2. The main representatives of Russian capital in the banking sector of Ukraine, mln UAH, as on May 01, 2019

Bank	Assets	Deposits	Credits	Financial results
«Alfa-Bank»	70180	52019	31554	1310
Sberbank of Russia	63163	7329	14453	-7614
Prominvestbank	46100	3779	5801	-3340
Ukrasotsbank	34006	1217	7654	-1195
«Forward Bank»	2610	1470	1093	-165
«First Investment Bank»	1793	1318	514	60
«Unex Bank»	1013	560	295	-11
TOTAL	218866	67692	61365	-10955

Source: National Bank of Ukraine.

In General, since the beginning of 2015, the assets of these banks with Russian capital, as of May 1, 2019, have fallen from 14.4% of the assets of the entire banking system of Ukraine to 11.5%. However, behind the external retreat of these banks there is a rather serious systemic risk for the financial system of Ukraine. The structure of these assets of the Russian banks changed towards reducing assets in national currency by 1%, and increasing assets in foreign currency by 26%. At the same time, for the entire banking system, the volume of assets in national currency increased by 2.5 times, and assets in foreign currency by 27%. As of 01.05.2019, foreign currency funds accounted for almost 70% of the assets of the banks with Russian capital, with an average of 40% for the entire banking system of Ukraine. Foreign currency assets of banks with Russian capital account for over 20% of all foreign currency assets of Ukrainian banks, equating to 27% of the official foreign currency reserves of the

National Bank of Ukraine. This concentration of foreign currency funds in the hands of Russian banks provides bargaining chips putting pressure on the monetary authorities, and successful lobbying of their interests in the banking and financial sector of Ukraine.

Changes in the share of industries in the turnover of banks with Russian capital also reflect a change in the priorities of Russian capital in Ukraine. In general, there is a shift in focus from the basic commodity and services sectors (including financial services and trade) to the technology industries (Fig. 6). The four priority sectors of Russian capital investment in 2014 were energy, metallurgy, trade and services. They were replaced by a new four: mechanical engineering, agriculture and food processing, transport and communications, and construction. This shift in the Russian capital positioning can provide it a voice in shaping the new Ukrainian economy, especially in the strategic areas of integration with European markets.

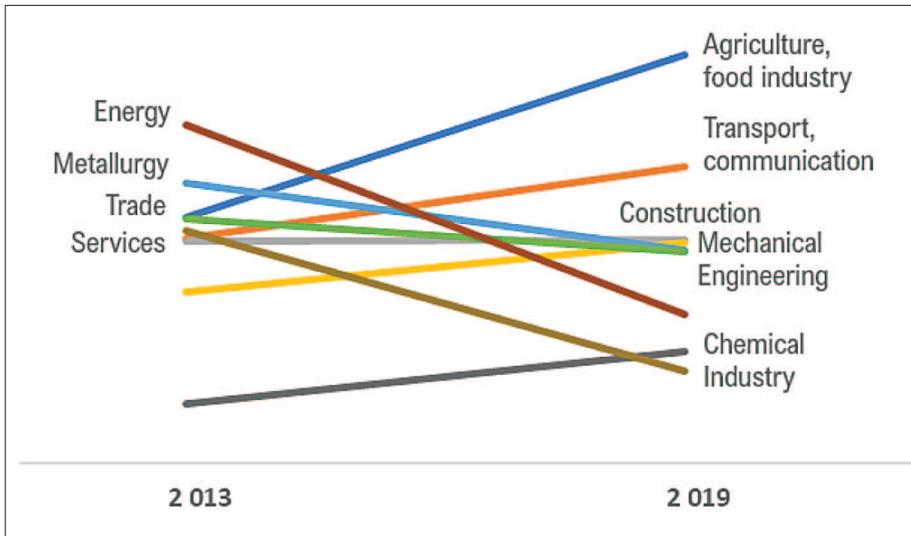


Fig. 6. Changes in the priorities Russian capital banks after 2013 (Ranking).

Source: Banks' financial statements

2.2.4. Lobbying of Russian interests in the banking and financial sphere

Due to an open political-military and trade-economic war between the two countries, the Ukrainian business climate became increasingly toxic for Russian capital. Operations of Russian capital lost their meaning, became marginal or even unprofitable. Due to these circumstances, staying in Ukraine required not only business, but also

political astuteness. Lobbying plays a leading role in these strategic games aiming at holding positions in terms of weak market opportunities. It should be noted that the corruption environment has a multiplier effect on the possibility of lobbying the financial interests of Russian entities in Ukraine.

The main parameters of Russian capital’s banking and financial operations described above allow us outlining the main channels for lobbying its interests in Ukraine. They, in particular, include:

1. Personal relations channel. We are talking primarily about the personal connections or insider contractors. Russian capital effectively uses this tool in the context of a poorly developed system of regulating in Ukraine the lobbying activities and high corruption compliance of the Ukrainian state system. The most striking implementation of this strategy is to provide former government officials with high-level functions, making them responsible for relations with the state and regulatory authorities. Russian banks have recruited people with significant experience in power, who preserved networks of connections due to their past service in government positions. At the same time, the possibility of turning people who came to power after working in Russian or partially Russian companies into agents of influence is also used. This strategy is also associated with the promotion of former or current representatives of the companies into public areas interesting for an institution. For example, at the time of entering Ukraine in 2008, Sberbank of Russia recruited former Ukrainian Minister of Finance Igor Yushko a Chairman of the Board of the newly established representative office in Ukraine. It was a person well-versed in the work of the Ukrainian financial system and the bureaucratic machine. He had deep connections at the highest levels. Another well-known fact is the work of businessman Timur Khromaev in Sberbank of Russia in Ukraine in 2002 (according to the NBU²⁹), as a Deputy Chairman of the Board. At the time of his appointment, Khromaev had experience in the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine and was a liaison between the Ministry, the National Bank of Ukraine and the State Treasury of Ukraine in managing the national debt of Ukraine. Later in 2015, as known, Khromaev became the Head of the National Commission on Securities and Stock Market.

2. Industry lobbying channel. The investment and business advantages of Russian capital are distributed mainly in favour of economic sectors that have a strong industry lobby in Ukraine – agriculture, transport, engineering, etc. Partnership in these industries allows using their communication resources and lobbying to push specific interests. It is known, for example, that the industrial lobby was one of the decisive

²⁹ Most likely, we are talking about the function of Deputy Chairman of the Board of the Russian Bank NRB-Ukraine, which eventually became the basis for the formation of a subsidiary Sberbank of Russia in Ukraine.

forces that disrupted the signing of the Association Agreement with the EU by the former President V. Yanukovich in 2013. The focus of the Russian capital in such areas of economy as construction, metallurgy, finance and trade opens the opportunities of effective promoting of their interests in the highest state authorities – at the level of the President, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Parliament – by using the levers of influence of these industries on the country’s economy, and most importantly, their developed lobbying infrastructure.

3. Specialized financial lobby. Membership in specialized banking and financial associations of Ukraine, and the attempts to establish control over exchange and other stock organizations in Ukraine, provides for Russian financial institutions direct access to financial power and an effective tool for influencing it.

4. Direct political influence is at the expense of businessmen-politicians and their own financial lobby in the Parliament and in the Government. In addition to friendly bank owners and financiers, who have turned into politicians and parliamentarians, Russian capital has its own group of sympathies at various levels of government, including in various state, expert, advisory bodies and commissions.

5. Influence on public opinion through friendly market analysts, journalists and experts, specialists of non-governmental, information and research centers.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE ACTIVITIES OF PRO-RUSSIAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN UKRAINE

3.1. Donor assistance

One of the directions of Russia’s activities in preparation for aggression against Ukraine was to work with the Ukrainian population to establish a basis and a favourable for the Russian Federation environment among Ukrainian citizens. The plan was implemented in the framework of the “Russky Mir” and support to compatriots concepts, which, among other things, provided the creation and development of a wide network of pro-Russian non-governmental and political organizations in Ukraine.

A wide network of pro-Russian non-governmental organizations, both registered in Ukraine and Ukrainian representative offices of Russian public organizations, operated on the territory of Ukraine. A large number of these organizations have stopped or suspended their work due to the achievement of their goals or the adoption of appropriate measures of counteraction by the state bodies of Ukraine and the Ukrainian society. Some of them still exist.

The main officially declared activities of pro-Russian non-governmental organizations:

- protection of the rights and freedoms of the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine;
- assistance in strengthening and developing the Russian language on the territory of Ukraine;
- development of Russian culture and Russian Orthodoxy in Ukraine;
- informing the population of Ukraine about the state and prospects of the development of the Ukrainian-Russian relations’.

In fact, pro-Russian public organizations directly and indirectly ***promoted the national interests of the Russian Federation in Ukraine***. In this direction they ***performed a number of tasks***:

- informing the Ukrainian society about the foreign policy priorities of the Russian Federation in the post-Soviet area, imposing pro-Russian views;
- promotion of the ideas of unity of the East Slavic peoples, by using historical means to promote Russian foreign policy priorities;
- spreading of an atmosphere of dissatisfaction with the Ukrainian state policy among the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine and, in this way, creation of instability prerequisites in the regions of its compact residence – in the East and South of the country;

- forming the public opinion in the interests of Russia and a negative attitude to Ukraine’s integration into NATO and the EU;
- hindering the implementation of state programs and plans aimed at the European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine, by holding among other the public actions;
- demonstration of Russia in the light of a world center of power, a patron state of the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine, a guarantor of stability and security;
- expansion of the range of Russian-language media and other printed publications;
- studying the socio-political situation in the country, the situation with the Russian-speaking population to inform the political circles of the Russian Federation.

To be more reasoned in convincing the Russian-speaking population, the pro-Russian organizations often manipulated the concept of “Russian”, which in the Ukrainian language has two translations and two meanings: “Rusky” – the one that originated from the time of the Rus existence (with Kyiv as a capital of that state); “Rosiysky” – the one of the origin of Russia (Rosiya in Ukrainian or Rossiya in Russian). First of all, this related to language and nationality. Using exclusively Russian language, pro-Russian organizations actively help Russia to strengthen its narrative of Rus origin, aimed at undermining Ukrainian statehood.

For financial and institutional support of these activities the Russian resources and Ukrainian pro-Russian organizations are used. The first group includes:

- Russian World Foundation (Russkiy Mir Foundation);
- Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund;
- Federal Agency “Rossotrudnichestvo” (Fig. 7)



Fig. 7. Russian sources of NGO funding in Ukraine.

The **Russian World Foundation** carries out anti-Ukrainian activities, disguising it as language promotion, support for compatriots, historical, cultural, scientific, educational and other events. Financial support is provided in the form of projects or events grants. In addition, the Foundation provides permanent financial support to certain organizations, including those in Ukraine.

Russian National Cultural Society, headed by Yevgeny Baklanov, was established in Kyiv in April 2016³⁰. The organization was created with the support of the Russian World Foundation and “Rossotrudnichestvo”. Among recent events, on July 5-7, 2019 in the Poltava region, with the support of the Russian World Foundation, the Association held events on the occasion of the 310th anniversary of the Battle of Poltava, which brought together dozens of Ukrainian participants from different regions³¹. On October 19, 2019 in Lviv, in cooperation with the Lviv City public organizations Zemlattsvo Leningrazhtsev in Lviv “Peter club” and Women’s Club “Lada”, the XIV regional literary and historical competition of high school students from 6 schools in Lviv and Ternopil, named “I Love you, Peter’s creation...”, was held. The organiza-

³⁰ http://www.bfro.be/ru/v/-kieve-sozdano-russkoe-nacional-no-kul-turnoe-obschestvo.html?cmp_id=108&news_id=18957

³¹ <https://ruskiymir.ru/news/259154/>

tion actively encouraged Ukrainians to join the Russian online propaganda campaign “Immortal Regiment – without borders!” through its resources. Young people were encouraged to apply to Russian Universities on a special quota.

Since September 2015, the Centre for Legal Advice for Compatriots has been operating in Kyiv³². The Centre was founded by the State Organization “Association of Compatriots “Peace Initiatives – Razvitiye”, with the support of “Rossotrudnichestvo” and the Russian World Foundation. Yevgeny Baklanov is also the Head of the Centre. The danger of this Centre is that it actively works with internally displaced persons from Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In its news line on the legal decisions in Ukraine, the Association posted a greeting to Putin on the 75th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War.

In 2011, the Slavic Values Foundation was established in Kyiv. Headed by Oleksandr Gudilov, it was re-registered in 2014 with the active participation of the same Yevgeny Baklanov³³. The Foundation works on the entire territory of Ukraine, holds events, and supports various initiatives, in particular, in Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Zhytomyr, Poltava, and other cities. The events are supported by the Russian World Foundation.

Russian centers are practically absent in Ukraine, with the exception of temporarily occupied territories – in Luhansk, Donetsk and Horlivka. The Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Kyiv is a partner of the Russian World Foundation³⁴. This center, in particular, promotes studying of Ukrainian students in Russian Universities. At the same time, offices of Russian World, according to information from the website of this Foundation as of July 2019, were opened outside the occupied territories – in the cities of Mykolaiv, Kherson and Kharkiv region – in Balakliya, Valky, Volchansk, Zlochiv, Izium and Krasnohrad. It is not surprising that the Kharkiv region in 2014 was a step away from becoming the so-called “KhPR” (Kharkiv People’s Republic). The question remains whether the presence of the office of the Russian World in Balakliya and the explosions at military warehouses in March 2017 are a coincidence. However, as of May 2020, Ukraine was not included in the published list of offices of the Russian World.

Russian World Foundation named 155 organizations in Ukraine as its partners in Ukraine [35], including³⁵:

- All-Ukrainian National Cultural and Educational Society “Russkoye Sobraniye” (Kyiv) with a branch in Vinnytsia;
- All-Ukrainian Society of Russian Culture “Rus” (Kyiv) with offices in Vinnytsia, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, Kharkiv and Khmelnytsky;

³² <http://mir-in-razvitiye.ru/>

³³ <http://scfond.ru/>

³⁴ <http://ukr.rs.gov.ru/ru>

³⁵ <https://ruskiymir.ru/catalogue/catalog.php?country=72>

- NGO “Russian School” (Kyiv, there are its offices in 20 regions);
- Dnipropetrovsk Regional Charity Organization “Dobrodar” (Dnipropetrovsk);
- Russian House Transcarpathian Society of Russian Culture (Mukachevo);
- Izmail Pushkin Society (IPS) (Izmail);
- Kiev City National and Cultural Society of Old Believers-Lipovans (Kyiv);
- Kiev Society of Russian Compatriots “Rodina” (Kyiv);
- Novograd-Volyn Cossack Society of the International Public Organization (Novograd-Volynsky);
- Society of Buryat Culture (SBC) of Kyiv and Kyiv region (Kyiv);
- The Society of the Don Cossacks in Luhansk region (Ukraine);
- Russian Culture Society “Russky Mir” (v. Minai);
- NGO “Luhansk District of Don Cossacks”;
- Russian National Community “Rusich-Mykolaiv” (Mykolaiv);
- Russian Community of Kyiv (Kyiv);
- Russian National Cultural Society of the Kharkiv Region (Kharkiv);
- Russian A.S. Pushkin Society (Lviv);
- Kharkiv Union of Groups and Masters of Russian Folk Art (Kharkiv).

Most of these organizations are “on hold”, or are involved in one-time promotions. However, there are organizations that are still active today.

The Gorchakov Foundation currently operates mainly in the occupied territories of Ukraine. For example, in August 2019, it supported the youth camp-forum “Donuzlav”, attended among others by the representatives of ORDLO (temporary occupied and uncontrolled territories of Ukraine). Among the projects that are financially supported by the Foundation is the “Telemost “Peace Dialogue of Russia and Ukraine” project. In October 2018, in Yalta, the Foundation, in cooperation with the Integration Committee “Russia – Donbas”, held an international Conference “Russian-Ukrainian Relations: Problems and Prospects”. Some Ukrainian experts (e.g. political scientist Pavlo Rudyakov) also participated in the event.

Attracting Ukrainian experts to Russian events to demonstrate the “other pro-Russian Ukraine” became one of the most important activities of the Foundation. On June 13, 2017 in Moscow, the Gorchakov Foundation held an expert discussion “The Ukrainian Issue. Scenarios for the Development of the Ukrainian Crisis”, where the representative of the Russian-centric Kyiv Centre for Political and Conflict Research headed by M. Pohrebinsky (Denis Kiriukhin) spoke.

Federal Agency (FA) “**Rossotrudnichestvo**” (<http://rs.gov.ru/ru/about>) has its official representative office in Ukraine – Russian Centre of Science and Culture in Kyiv (Kyiv, 2 Borysohlibska Str.). It is chaired by Lidia Diachenko. FA “Rossotrudnichestvo” works, among other, with certain organizations in Ukraine including:

- NGO “Centre of National Cultures” (Kyiv): holding public events, in particular, the International Peace Day on 21.09.2019;
- P. A. Stolypin International Association of Slavic Unity (Kyiv): conducting public events, in particular, in the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra in cooperation with the Russian Embassy in Ukraine;
- International Pedagogical Club (Kyiv): conducting events promoting the Russian language and culture;
- NGO “Kharkiv Society of the Eastern Slavs” (Kharkiv): conducting historical readings;
- NGO “Veterans of the Great Patriotic War, Labour and Military Service»;
- NGO “Rusich Mykolaiv” (Mykolaiv): conducting cultural events;
- Youth Club “Kyivan” (Kyiv);
- NGO “Leningrad Community in Lviv “Peter-Club” (Lviv);
- Kiev Society of Russian Compatriots “Rodina” (city of Kyiv): conducting cultural events.

“Rossotrudnichestvo” also cooperates with other public organizations in Ukraine on a one-time basis, including children and cultural organizations. “Rossotrudnichestvo” organizes and supports language (the spread of the Russian language), cultural, historical, and humanitarian events. The Agency pays special attention to cooperation with organizations of socially vulnerable population segments, since it is easier to establish partnerships with them at relatively small financial costs. Ukrainian children are also in the Foundation’s focus. Thus, in the spring of 2020, “Rossotrudnichestvo” executed the project called “Memory of Generations: Ukrainian Children About the War”³⁶, in the framework of which children were attracted to readings about the Great Patriotic War and participated in the “Immortal Regiment” event (see pictures below).

³⁶ <http://ukr.rs.gov.ru/news/68139>



Source: <http://ukr.rs.gov.ru/ru/news/68334>

In 2008-2009, the co-author of this publication performed a study of pro-Russian organizations in Ukraine that represented a dangerous network, which posed a threat to the state security of Ukraine from such organizations' functioning. The results of the study were presented in the National Security and Defence Council. The work was updated in 2015 and published³⁷. Some of the public organizations identified at that time were functioning in temporarily occupied Crimea and ORDLO, and therefore their current analysis is not appropriate. The analysis includes organizations currently active or being on “stand-by”, but still registered.

In addition to the above-mentioned organizations, which are the direct counterparts of the above-mentioned Russian foundations, the main pro-Russian non-governmental organizations in Ukraine established before 2014 but still registered today, include³⁸:

- All-Ukrainian Public Organization “Russian Movement of Ukraine” (Kyiv, apt. 112, 21A Malysenko Str.): has 10 divisions, including in the cities of Lviv, Zaporizhzhya, Odesa, Uzhhorod, Bila Tserkva, and Donetsk and Luhansk regions;
- All-Ukrainian Public Organization “Union of the Russian People”;
- All-Ukrainian Public Scientific Organization “Ukrainian Academy of Russian Studies”: has its Luhansk division. Back in 2008, the organization issued 25

³⁷ http://irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbuv/cgiirbis_64.exe?C21COM=2&I21DBN=UJRN&P21DBN=UJRN&IMAGE_FILE_DOWNLOAD=1&Image_file_name=PDF/pubpolpr_2016_1_10.pdf

³⁸ <http://www.materik.ru/nationals/database/migrants/index.php?country=34>

thousand textbooks “Country Studies. Russia” for the 5th grade and textbooks “Reunification of Russia” for the re-qualification of the teachers. They were distributed in Crimea, the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and can still be found in the libraries there³⁹;

- All-Ukrainian Public Organization “Human Rights Public Movement “Russian-Speaking Ukraine” (*Kyiv, office 2, 8 E. Chavdar Street. Its Chairman is Vadym V. Kolesnichenko*): the division of this organization is located in occupied Donetsk;
- All-Ukrainian Public Association “For Ukraine, Belarus and Russia” (*ZUBR, Kyiv, apt. 68, 44-b Revutsky Str. Its Chairman is Olena Mazur*): has divisions in Kropyvnytsky, Zaporizhzhya and Transcarpathian region;
- Public Organization “Union of Loyal Cossacks” (*Kyiv*): the specified head of the organization is also O. A. Mazur, Deputy of the III Convocation, and Deputy of the NAS “Centre for Scientific Initiatives”. She is put on the sanctions list of Ukraine, the EU, the US, the UK, Canada and Japan. In Odesa, a related organization – NGO “O. Suvorov Union of Loyal Black Sea Cossacks” has functioned since 2009 (*Odesa, 14/17 Heroes of Stalingrad Str.*);
- All-Ukrainian Public Organization “Russian-Ukrainian Integration Forum” (*Kyiv, 45 Bortnytska Str.*): co-founder of the “Russian-Ukrainian Investment and Commercial Centre” (*Kyiv, 20 Liuteranska Str.* Its Director is Lyubov Sobchishina), Russian NGO “Russian Union of Commodity Producers”, “Russian Media Centre” and Individual Enterprises;
- NGO “Russian Community of Ukraine” (*Kyiv, apt. 218, 9 Obolonsky Avenue*): has branches in Odesa, Kherson and Dnipro;
- All-Ukrainian Public and Pedagogical Organization “Russian School” (*city of Kyiv*): it was re-registered in 2015 (<http://schoolru.com.ua/about/>);
- NGO “Cultural and Linguistic Equality”, Kharkiv (*Chairman is Gennady Makarov*): it is absent in the register, but the organization’s website is supported and has an openly pro-Russian content. Makarov is the Chairman of the “Russian Council (Veche)”;
- International public organization “World Russian Council (Sobor)” (*Kyiv, apt. 354, 5 Drahomanov Str.* Its registered Chairman is G. V. Mokiienko);
- Slavic Committee of Ukraine (*Kyiv, suite 7, 21A Lesi Ukrainky Str.* Its Chairman is Mykola F. Lavrinenko): it has seven regional offices;

³⁹ http://texty.org.ua/pg/article/textynewseditor/read/75230/Cherez_apatiju_miscevoji_vlady_na_skhodi_Ukrainy

- Kharkiv Regional Public Organization “Triune Rus” (*Kharkiv region, Chuhuiv district, the settlement of Malynivska, apt. 18, 4 Bohdan Khmelnytsky Str.*): is under termination procedure.

In addition, de jure, there is a Ukrainian Branch of the Institute of CIS Countries (*Kyiv, 119 Saksahanskoho Str.* Its Director is Denis O. Denisov). However, its activity has almost ceased.

3.2. Producers of social activity

It is worth paying attention to activities of some pro-Russian organizations. Thus, the Transcarpathian Russian Culture Society “**Rus**” took over the activity of its predecessors – the Russian culture societies of Uzhhorod and Mukachevo. For several years, the “Rus” Society includes: the office in the Irshavsky district, Uzhhorod “Zastava”, the Scout Federation “Galician Rus,” and “New Family” Charity Fund. The company operates in Mukachevo, Khust, and Uzhhorod district, village of Pushkinevo in the Vinogradivsky district. The Society unites about a thousand people, including the collective members. “Rus” is a member of the All-Ukrainian Union of Civil Society Organizations “Russian Commonwealth” and the All-Ukrainian Coordinating Council of Organizations of Russian Compatriots. Members of the Society represented Ukraine and Transcarpathia in Russia at the II and III World Congresses of Russian Compatriots.

The All-Ukrainian Civil Society Association “For Ukraine, Belarus and Russia” (ZUBR), established in April 2001, is fighting for the reunification of the three Slavic states of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, “the restoration of political, economic and cultural ties of the three fraternal countries, the revival of Orthodox and Slavic culture in contrast to Western ideology and culture.” Since September 2001, ZUBR has been dealing with the problems of Ukrainians in Transnistria, creating a Ukrainian Consulate in Tiraspol. The organization acted as a co-founder of the newspaper “Slavic People” and “ZaZUBRina”. On May 9, 2014 in Kyiv, ZUBR representatives participated in the events commemorating the Victory in the GPW together with the Communist Party of Ukraine, and wore the St. George’s ribbons.

The Slavic Committee of Ukraine (SCU) was registered by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on 23.09.1999 as a public organization. Its registration number is 1227. The initiator of its creation was I. Kyrpel. The idea was supported by the Communist Party of Ukraine, Socialist Party of Ukraine, Peasant Party of Ukraine and representatives of other parties and non-party citizens. The Organization publishes the “Slavic Nyva” magazine and “Slavic Vector” newspaper. The goal of its activity was to promote the strengthening of friendship between peoples close in origin

and culture, which have Slavic roots, the fight against the Americanization of the society, which “spoils the young generation, deprives it of the future, and incites interethnic and international conflicts.” The Declaration of the V Congress of the SCU on November 19, 2014, among other things, stated that “*due to the obvious interference of the U.S. Department of State and top officials of the European Union, an armed coup and mockery of the Communist Party of Ukraine were carried out in the country (Ukraine). It officially announced a course to destruction of everything related to the Soviet period, primarily the symbols and monuments. Vandalism is moving all over Ukraine with the consent of the top state officials.*” The phrase from the resolution that “*the country will propagandize Russophobia moods, oppress the Russian language and emasculate Ukrainian culture through its orientation to Western models and standards*” generally corresponds to the main theses of pro-Russian propaganda.

The Public Organization “Union of Loyal Cossacks”, which emerged from the International Association “Loyal Cossacks,” was established in 2004, and registered in 2005. The Chieftain of “Loyal Cossacks” is Oleksiy Selivanov. It is a part of the Union of Cossack Troops of Russia and Abroad (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. Symbols of the “Union of Loyal Cossacks”.

The main declared goal of the Union activities is protection of the Orthodox faith. In fact, it aims to protect the interests of the Russian Orthodox Church; Patriotic Orthodox education of young people and “restoration of historical truth”. In Ukraine, the organization extended its activities to the territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk regions. A rapid action team was created to protect churches from switching to the UOC (KP). Members of the NGO actively agitated Ukrainian citizens to avoid mobilization.

The key Ukrainian pro-Russian organization that provides financial support to others is the Public Movement “**Ukrainian Choice – the Right of the People**” (<http://vybor.ua/>), created in December 2011 by Viktor Medvedchuk, who is the Chairman

of the Organization. The organization declares that its goals are abandonment of the course of European integration but joining to the Russian integration associations. The Organization also conducts anti-Ukrainian events. Thus, representatives of the organization participated in events promoting Russian aggression against Ukraine. In particular, in March 2014, during the occupation of Crimea by Russia, representatives of the Organization blocked the passage of Ukrainian military near the city of Mykolaiv.

“Ukrainian Choice” has an extensive network of regional centers, represented in almost all regions of Ukraine⁴⁰ and closely cooperates with about five hundred public organizations, including⁴¹:

- All-Ukrainian Public Movement “Ukrainian Choice”(Chairman is V. Medvedchuk, Deputy Chairman is Colonel-General of Justice, former judge of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine V. I. Nimchenko);
- All-Ukrainian public movement “New Ukraine” (Chairman is V. P. Seminozhenko);
- NGO “Association of Leaders of Territorial Communities” (chaired by L.S. Porechkin);
- NGO “Union of Orthodox Fraternities” (V. B. Lukianyk);
- NGO “All-Ukrainian Centre “Public Initiative and Legal Protection” (I. F. Potapov);
- the All-Ukrainian Political Association “Slavic Party” (O.V. Luzan);
- NGO “Association of Slavic Activists” (A.G. Bezugly).

“Ukrainian Choice” actively supports the political party “Opposition Bloc Za Zhyttia”, which passed to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the IX Convocation. The organization implements a number of projects aimed at the federalization of Ukraine, the introduction of direct democracy through referendums, the introduction of dual citizenship, and change of the foreign policy course from European and Euro-Atlantic integration to integration with Russia.

Thus, by 2014, Ukraine had an extensive network of pro-Russian non-governmental organizations that promoted pro-Russian ideology aimed at destroying the Ukrainian state. Most of them were established in 2009-2010, on the eve of the presidential elections, won by V. Yanukovich. In other words, these pro-Russian public organizations actually contributed to the revenge of pro-Russian forces after the “Orange Revolution” of 2004.

⁴⁰ <http://vybor.ua/office/>

⁴¹ http://vybor.ua/documents/novaja_konstitucia/21.html

After 2014, some pro-Russian public organizations stopped their functioning, but most of them still exist de jure, although de facto they do not show much activity, or at least, do not advertise it. Such organizations are mainly concentrated in Donetsk, Luhansk, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhya, Transcarpathian, Chernihiv, Kherson and Odesa regions, which requires additional attention to these regions.

The lack of reaction to the pro-Russian organizations in 2008-2009 and the sluggish response after the start of Russian aggression threaten revenge of the “Russky Mir” based on pro-Russian non-governmental organizations, whose activities are not suspended and can be re-activated at any time. All Russia needs is define the tasks and provide funding for them.

3.3. Russian influences: Religious aspect

The Russian Federation traditionally uses the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) as a means of political influence on other states. Statements of Russian President Vladimir Putin that Orthodoxy and the nuclear shield strengthen Russia’s security⁴² have been illustrated by the situation in the Balkans⁴³, Central Europe and Ukraine for more than a decade. But, in fact, the ROC is not a protective shield in Russia’s geopolitics, but

an offensive weapon, a tool for implementing Russian interests.

The lack of reaction to the public pro-Russian organizations in 2008-2009 and the sluggish response after the start of Russian aggression threaten revenge of the “Russky Mir” based on pro-Russian non-governmental organizations, whose activities are not suspended and can be re-activated at any time. All Russia needs is define the tasks and provide funding.

The example of Church relations between Ukraine and Russia demonstrates quite clearly how aggressive and consistent the Russian Church policy is, how the ROC is state-

controlled and linked to the special services of the Russian Federation, and how the tools for influencing the society are rich. The long-term influence of official Moscow through on Ukraine the ROC reaches its apogee, starting in 2012. It was most dramatically manifested during the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014, the acquisition of autocephaly in 2018, and its behaviour during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020.

The tools that Russia uses through the ROC are being changed, supplemented, and enriched. They, in particular, include:

⁴² <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/20667.html>

⁴³ <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-world/2545092-rosijski-oligarhi-v-evropi-futbol-cerkva-i-robot-na-kreml.html>

- promoting the activities of pro-Russian politicians and political forces that support the ROC (represented by the UOC-MP) in Ukraine, and the ROC supports them;
- creation of diverse pro-Russian organizations: unions and centers of Orthodox citizens, Orthodox fraternities, unions of Orthodox lawyers, Orthodox women, unity of Orthodox peoples, Orthodox hosts, support for canonical Orthodoxy;
- creation of a combat wing of dioceses under the guise of “Cossack” organizations⁴⁴;
- financial support of local bishops – the “Generalitat” of the UOC-MP;
- the spread of fundamentalist thinking (so-called spiritual tools);
- infiltration into the power structures of the “Confessors,” who work closely with Moscow⁴⁵;
- formation of thinking and moods that lead to crimes.

The ROC (read official Russia) exercises its influence through the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, which is actually its proxy agent in Ukraine. In turn, it actively interacts with pro-Russian political forces – “Ukrainian Choice”, “Opposition Bloc”, and previously with the now-banned Communist Party of Ukraine of P. Simonenko, the Progressive Socialist Party of N. Vitrenko, the Party of Regions of V. Yanukovych.

Published by Ukrainian activists from “Cyber Alliance” archive⁴⁶ (its authenticity was confirmed by specialists of the SSU, Belingcat and the Atlantic Council) of “Church expert” from Russia, Kirill Frolov gives a picture of how the influence on the Ukrainian Church and politics has been forming⁴⁷. Frolov kept extensive correspondence on Ukrainian topics with a manager of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation, Boris Lukichov, relying on Ukrainian informants. He writes about the organization of anti-autocephalous and anti-Western actions in Ukraine: “the UOC-MP network is perfect for mass propaganda against NATO.” We are talking about transferring money for the Orthodox movement to the Crimean parishes of the UOC-MP, and organizing a meeting of Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych (at that time) with

⁴⁴ This and the previous points are described in detail in the book by Tatiana Derkach “Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine. Anatomy of betrayal”.

⁴⁵ We will dwell further in details. This paragraph illustrates the investigation of the group of Ukrainian hacktivists “Ukrainian Cyberalliance”, described in details on the web-pages of “Infonapalm” and “Petr and Mazepa”.

⁴⁶ <https://ua.112.ua/golovni-novyni/sbu-provodyt-ekspertyzu-nibyto-lystuvannia-surkova-bilshist-dokumentiv-pidtvverdzeni-348159.html>

⁴⁷ FrolovLeaks: the church’s expert on influence in Ukraine. Episode. URL: <https://informnapalm.org/30705-frolovleaks-votserkovlennye-eksperty-kremlya-epizod1/> <https://informnapalm.org/30831-frolovleaks-part3/>.

Patriarch Kirill. The question of search and assignment of a spiritual adviser for Yanukovych is discussed. According to the Russian ascetic tradition, a spiritual adviser or confessor has a very great influence on his ward.

It is significant that Frolov’s letters mention a confessor of the head of the General staff of the armed forces of Ukraine, Gregory Pedchenko, and Andrii Novikov – a priest with black hundred views, secretary of the head of the Odesa diocese, Metropolitan Agathangel (now serving in Moscow). He lobbied for the appointment of Pedchenko to the post of Minister of defence of Ukraine. That is, the confessor of the head of the General Staff, who is devoted to the ROC and Moscow, not only knows all its secrets but also influences his ward, promotes him to the post of head of the Defence department⁴⁸. It is significant that Gregory Pedchenko, who was the head of the General Staff of the AFU from 2010 to 2012, sought to consolidate the change in the security of landmarks and the geopolitical orientation of Ukraine, which was carried out during Yanukovych presidency. The key indicator is an increase in the number of joint exercises with the RF armed forces: “We have significantly expanded the scope of our military cooperation. If last year there were 40 such events, this year there will be 81. This is a powerful step forward. There are a lot of trained officers and specialists in Russia who have completed practical training, and this is very important for us.”

The letters discuss in detail the situation in the UOC-MP in connection with the illness of its head, Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan), in order to put a protégé of the ROC in charge when he’ll pass away. Frolov transmits information about Ukraine to the Russian power Olympus through Adviser of the President Sergey Glazyev, Director of the Institute of CIS countries Konstantin Zatulin. Several letters to the assistant of the President of the Russian Federation Vladislav Surkov were also found. Frolov also carries on correspondence with the most radical opponent of Ukrainian autocephaly, clericus Vsevolod Chaplin. It is noticeable how a pool of pro-Russian politicians who were supposed to be “defenders of Orthodoxy” is being formed. There are bishops of “Kremlin lobby” singled out, who would later be the headliners of the separatist actions in the South, the East and the Transcarpathian region. The outlines of a future debacle of Ukraine, plans of division, anti-Western media campaigns, and contrasting of the Orthodoxy and another immoral and destructive path of development are being formed.

The reliability of a hacked archive is well demonstrated by the chain of events. Thus, plans to replace Metropolitan Volodymyr became a reality. In 2013, Metropolitan Volodymyr was removed from the cathedra, and his Secretary, who repre-

⁴⁸ FrolovLeaks: Goebbels Patriarch, the recruitment of Ukrainian generals and the baptism by fire in Syria. Episode IV. URL: <https://informnapalm.org/31142-frolovleaks-4/>.

sented pro-Ukrainian forces, was taken under arrest, under which he was until the victory of the Maidan⁴⁹. We should note that active influence on the election Onuphrius (Orest Berezovsky), protégé of the Russian Orthodox Church Metropolitan of Chernivtsi and Bukovyna, a Primate of the UOC-MP was exercised by the “church-going” oligarch, MP, Russian citizen (until recently) Vadym Novinsky, who can be seen as an analogue of the Russian “Orthodox oligarch” Konstantin Malofeyev and a key provider of the interests of the ROC in Ukraine, not only in the context of church affairs.

Interestingly, in November 2013, Moscow hosts a Congress of “Cossack” confessors, which is convened by Patriarch Kirill. According to Nikolai Mitrokhin, a religious scholar far from sympathizing Ukraine, “there was actually coordination between the priests and the leaders of the Cossack detachments who were part of the delegation just before the invasion to Ukraine. Kirill personally ordered that the “Gifts of the Magi” – a Shrine kept on mount Athos – go first to Kyiv, and then to Simferopol and Sevastopol, although these two cities were not on the program at all. A Russian delegation arrived with them to persuade the Crimean elite to join Russia. This was more than a month before the invasion. Girkin accompanied this delegation as the chief security guard, and it was then when he met [Serhii] Aksionov. This, according to many sources, was the starting point for the formation of his unit, which two months later captured Sloviansk and started the war in Donbas”⁵⁰.

Then the terrorist Igor Girkin arrived at the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra under the guise of a pilgrimage, accompanying the Athos Shrine “Gifts of the Magi”. A retired officer of the Russian special services, in fact – one of the terrorists, an active participant and co-organizer of events in Crimea and Donbas, came to Kyiv before the annexation, ostensibly to accompany the Orthodox Shrine, and then visited a number of dioceses, where soon Russian saboteur killed Ukrainian patriots and seize the power⁵¹. He is closely associated with the Russian “Orthodox” oligarch Konstantin Malofeyev, who was entrusted by the Russian administration with the mission of complicity in the annexation of Crimea.

Later, a citizen of the Russian Federation, Commander-In-Chief of the so-called “army of Novorossiia”, Igor Girkin recognized: “All my personal security service consisted of spiritual sons, monks, and hieromonks of the Svyatogirska Lavra.

⁴⁹ <https://tsn.ua/politika/yanukovich-i-ko-dovodili-do-smerti-mitropolita-volodimira-za-nakazom-patriarha-kirila-355824.html?fbclid=IwAR01RUppEYjwPb6zO4885rIplXISqxNq90Osai-SUa3DGw39lulqvN45xiw> <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-polytics/2125407-oleksandr-drabinko-mitropolit-upc-mp.html>.

⁵⁰ <https://meduza.io/feature/2019/02/01/vzglyadam-patriarha-kirilla-otvechaet-katolicheskaya-model-ustroystva-tserkvi>.

⁵¹ <https://tyzhden.ua/News/108627>.

Completely. To the last man. It was not numerous, but nevertheless, they were...One of our units in the Sloviansk brigade was commanded by a novice of the Svyatogirskaya Lavra. Moreover, that novice held a rather high position, but a logistic one, in the Lavra”⁵².

After the Revolution of Dignity, Russia started a war against Ukraine. The ROC and its branch in Ukraine, the UOC-MP, took a very clear position in this war. Describing it, famous religious expert Viktor Yelenskiy said: “It has never been so hostile (the rhetoric of the UOC MP – ed.). For many years, they have had resources that spoke the language of disdain against the Kyiv Patriarchate, but they did not dare to speak so against the Ukrainian state and in general – against the Ukrainian idea. Now there are several resources that have completely switched to the side of the enemy”⁵³.

Valerii Otstavnykh, who was the Deputy Head of the missionary department of the Tula diocese of the ROC, a member of the Association of Orthodox experts, gave a succinct description of the work of the Kremlin – FSB – ROC – UOC-MP chain in conducting the hybrid war against Ukraine in an interview with Radio Svoboda: “The ROC, in conjunction with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, took part in attempts to suppress the events on the Maidan. When they brought “titushkas” from the East of Ukraine, they were placed in the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra. There are photos where there are buses with Russian numbers; “titushkas” were brought in from Russia. While “titushkas” were eating and having rest there, the doors of the Lavra were closed, services were stopped for technical reasons. Then “titushkas” were taken somewhere to the Maidan, to the Mariinsky Park, where they punched the heads of supporters of reforms, opponents of Yanukovych. The Church took an active part in intelligence operations. This is clearly evidenced by Strelkov-Girkin. He says that it was a special operation called “Gifts of the Magi”. In

In the period 2014-2019, after the death of Metropolitan Volodymyr, the pro-Ukrainian part of his entourage was expelled from the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra and the official structures of the UOC-MP. The official sponsor of the Metropolitan became a Russian citizen who received Ukrainian citizenship and a Deputy position in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Orthodox oligarch Vadym Novinsky.

2013, the so-called “Gifts of the Magi”, such an ark, were brought to Kyiv and Crimea, all under the patronage of a person connected with the presidential administration, the Orthodox patron Malofeyev. Girkin also was in his environ”⁵⁴.

⁵² <https://gordonua.com/news/war/terrorist-girkin-vsya-moya-lichnaya-ohrana-sostoyala-iz-duhovnyh-synovey-monahov-ieromonahov-svyatogorskoy-lavry-426390.html>.

⁵³ <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/2310449-viktor-elenskij-narodnij-deputat-ukraini.html>.

⁵⁴ <https://www.svoboda.org/a/29086933.html>.

In the period 2014-2019, after the death of Metropolitan Volodymyr, the pro-Ukrainian part of his entourage was expelled from the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra and the official structures of the UOC-MP. The official sponsor of the Metropolitan became a Russian citizen who received Ukrainian citizenship and a Deputy position in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Orthodox oligarch Vadym Novinsky. The UOC-MP has become, in the words of theologian Kyrylo Govorun, the most loyal diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church and has completely moved into the mainstream of Russian official policy.

Everything that was put in place by the Russian government, the Russian secret services, and the Russian Orthodox Church in previous years began to be actively used during the revolution, the war, and the acquisition of autocephaly by Ukraine.

In dozens of dioceses of the UOC-MP as of 2014, a pro-Russian infrastructure in the form of pro-Russian non-governmental organizations of “Cossack” unions, prepared some bright speakers and providers of the ideas of exclusive “god-blessedness of triune Rus” and hatred for the post-Maidan power was formed. For example, the Kyiv diocese consists of more than two dozen pro-Russian public organizations and a number of priests and church activists who delivered anti-state sermons. In the Zhytomyr diocese, there is a Church built by the so-called “Faithful Cossacks”, where there are cadet classes and the “sisterhood of mercy”. In the Chernivtsi diocese, the monastery of Bishop Longin Zhar who called to disrupt the mobilization and is an adept of the triune Rus was strengthened under the Russians’ support. Moreover, he called the Ukrainian state anti-Christian and said that Bukovyna was the Romanian land. In Transcarpathia, the Russians supported the separatist priest of the “Rusyn movement,” Dmytro Sydor. It is known that the separatist movement “Subcarpathian Rusyns” was funded by Moscow. The main representative of the Kremlin lobby in the UOC-MP, Metropolitan Agathangel, managed the Odesa diocese. In the Odesa diocese, according to some estimates, there were more than a dozen “Cossack” organizations, among which the most famous were “Army of the loyal Black Sea Cossacks named after Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky”, “Union of troops of the loyal Black Sea Cossacks named after Alexander Suvorov”. The public position of the UOC-MP is that “Cossack” structures exist, they say, only for the protection of churches, metropolitans, actions like processions. In fact, these groups would have played the role of active distributors of Putin’s “Russian spring” if it had not been stopped in Odesa in May 2014. There is a reason to believe that Metropolitan Agathangel had special plans for them. For example, as a result of hacking Frolov’s mail, such a letter was published: “Metropolitan Agathangel called from a Czech phone number and said: “Let

Putin know that I and the entire Odesa diocese are waiting for decisive action on Odesa. The diocese supports me and is ready to fight. I am ready to lead the uprising spiritually and ideologically” (new Martyrs Foundation, 24.11.2014)⁵⁵.

One of the authors of these lines managed to record at this time an interview with a priest of the Moscow patriarchate at that time, which soon left it, about Ovruch diocese of the UOC-MP, in Polissya. For example, when giving the cross to be kissed after the Liturgy, the priests repeated the same phrase to the parishioners: “There is no salvation in Europe”. Over the next year, the ROC would impose the opinion that the proponents of the holy orthodoxy are fighting against the European Sodom and Ukrainian fascists. The idea that the post-Maidan government is ungodly was imposed by many priests both from the pulpit and in non-public communication with the faithful. At that time, there were even public scandals at sermons in Kyiv, when some of the faithful left the churches, accusing the priests that they were betraying the Motherland by public preaching.

Bishops and clergy of the UOC-Moscow Patriarchate began to be called Commissars of the hybrid war, in which they sided with Russia.

Guerilla in the Donbas was represented by the Russian military, mercenaries from the North Caucasus and Cossacks. It is known that the priests of the Russian Orthodox Church, contrary to canonical prescriptions about the impossibility of serving in the territory that belongs to another diocese, were sent as spiritual guardians for the “Cossack”, and in fact — terrorist groups to Donbas⁵⁶. The clergy of the UOC-MP serve as “confessors” of illegal armed groups, consecrate weapons, baptise, marry, and cooperate with the occupation authorities. Moreover, on the territory of the Svyatogirska Lavra and individual churches of the UOC-MP in Donbas, terrorists were hiding. There were places where weapons were stored⁵⁷ (see the photo below with armed militants with Igor Girkin at the head of the Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchy).

⁵⁵ <https://informnapalm.org/ua/frolovleaks-viii/>.

⁵⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Krr1-DBuyJU>.

⁵⁷ <https://www.religion.in.ua/news/vazhlivo/38658-general-rasskazal-ob-opyte-razoruzheniya-band-terroristov-kotoryx-na-donbasse-pokryvali-svyashhenniki-upc.html>.



And some near-spiritual practices are clearly anti-Ukrainian in nature. For example, some of them consecrated banners for the army of Novorossiya⁵⁸, icons with the name “Militia”⁵⁹, blessed Girkin publicly⁶⁰, met Russian tanks with bread and salt, and discredited the army⁶¹, consecrated the new so-called “authorities” in pseudo-republics, treated the war as a war of Ukraine against God⁶², and the Ukrainian government and army – as “castigators and junta”. At the time when the UOC-MP in Donbas consecrated the presence of Russian troops there, the Kyiv Metropolia used a different method of fighting against statehood. The Church authorities of the UOC-MP formed a discourse of persecution in society, claiming that the UOC-MP is a “Martyr Church”.

At a time when representatives of the Ukrainian state at the OSCE meetings talk about the need for solidarity with Ukraine, which is resisting aggression of the Kremlin, the ROC and the UOC-MP spread fake information about church persecution in Ukraine. A well-known fact of 2014, when Angela Merkel made claims to the Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseniy Yatsenyuk, based on information received personally from Putin⁶³, which turned out to be absolutely false.

⁵⁸ Tatiana Derkach "Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine. Anatomy of betrayal". P. 203, 215.

⁵⁹ Tatiana Derkach "Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine. Anatomy of betrayal". P. 216.

⁶⁰ Tatiana Derkach "Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine. Anatomy of betrayal". P. 216.

⁶¹ Kramatorsk. Priest Sergey Mironov. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKlulHJGLXc>.

⁶² Rats of the Antichrist on the Russian ship. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4aVoSWD1Ec>.

⁶³ <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/2310449-viktor-elenskij-narodnij-deputat-ukraini.html> .

In 2014, Metropolitan Onuphrius, a representative of the conditional party of “prayers and monks” of the Pochaiv “school”, which provides for extreme conservatism and unconditional loyalty to Moscow, was elected a head of the UOC-MP. Metropolitan Anthony Pakanich became a Chancellor (de facto head). Actually, this duumvirate ensured the rapid transformation of the UOC-MP into a department of the ROC without its own opinion and position. It is significant in this regard that the UOC-MP, which seems to declare its independence from Moscow, did not express any reaction to the fact that it was planned to place mosaics with Vladimir Putin and Joseph Stalin, as well as the expression “Crimea is ours” in the main church of the Russian Ministry of defence.

There is a department of external Church relations in the ROC apparatus, which is a kind of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its head Metropolitan **Hilarion (Alfeyev)**, and his first Deputy Archpriest **Nikolai (Balashov)** are connected with the Russian special services (the Foreign intelligence service and the Federal security service). Both compete with each other and both are responsible for the “Ukrainian issue”. Until recently, the curator of the “Church Foreign Ministry” was Vladislav Surkov.

According to the available information, it can be assumed that the remote operational management of the UOC-MP is carried out by Nikolay (Balashov). On the spot, the MP of Ukraine Vadym Novinsky keeps his finger on the pulse and controls it. He is the organizer of processions designed to demonstrate the strength and power of canonical Orthodoxy, the main speaker who voices the version of church persecution in Ukraine. Before the Revolution of Dignity, it had a major impact on Yanukovych and Minister of Internal Affairs Zakharchenko. He remained in Ukraine after Yanukovych’s flight and continues to lead the Church. However, project financing falls on the shoulders of not only Novinsky. For example, the funding of the anti-Autocephalous “Union of Orthodox Journalists” is provided by Ukrainian businessman, multi-millionaire Viktor Vyshnevetsky, founder of the coal company Coal Energy, whose coal enterprises are being investigated for financing terrorism in Donbas⁶⁴. It is interesting that both sponsors finance anti-Autocephalous PR, pay for flights to Moscow for hierarchs, but do not help much, for example, seminaries, temple construction, and the maintenance of ordinary priests. The UOJ website is not the only one; there are several other similar publications.

The goals of public and media activity of the UOC-MP are:

- creating the illusion of oppression of “canonical Orthodoxy” in the public mind;

⁶⁴ https://www.religion.in.ua/zmi/ukrainian_zmi/31481-oberezhno-spilka-pravoslavnix-zhurnalistiv.html

- representation of Ukraine in the world as an arena of a religious war;
- formation of a negative image of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) and receipt of Tomos by it;
- inciting conflict between the UOC-MP and the OCU;
- deformation of the information space to create an image of Russian invaders as friends, but compatriots loyal to the OCU as “ungracious dissenters”.

For this purpose, the UOC-MP created a special institution of the Commissioner for the protection of the rights of the believers. In fact, this is a mechanism for creating managed conflicts on religious grounds. Technology is an exclusively “special services” style: provoke a scandal with a media release – transform it into a conflict – create a crisis situation – solve the crisis. The latter is done with the participation of the Institute of the Commissioner for the protection of the rights of the believers in favour of the UOC-MP.

In addition, another task of the institution is to suppress the pro-Ukrainian sentiments of the clergy of the UOC-MP, imposing an opinion about the inevitability of “persecution” and the fear of losing their church property. The obstructionist position of the UOC-MP regarding quarantine measures in the context of the coronavirus epidemic proves that it is being made a tool for creating a crisis situation for a special operation on “protection of canonical Orthodoxy from persecution”.

Moscow does not stop its war against Ukrainian autocephaly after OCU received Tomos. In the first days after Tomos granting, through its adherents it made the attempts to seize the churches of two bishops of the UOC-MP who took part in the unification Council. These encroachments were repelled. Now, through its supporters in local churches, it sometimes comes out with a proposal to convene a pan-Orthodox Council to consider the Ukrainian issue. Then it voices a message that the Orthodox Church of Ukraine will be “re-established” with the help of Moscow and, as they say to elect a new Primate, who will be Onuphrius.

In General, Russia is officially interested not only in the influence on the Ukrainian Church. Its geopolitical ambitions are much broader. The media published news about the 300-page strategy for the development of Sergiev Posad (the Lavra of the Moscow region), as part of the initiative to transform the city into the “capital of Orthodoxy” or “Orthodox Vatican”⁶⁵. The project provides for the construction of a cultural and representative center around the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, which will include a Museum of Orthodox art, a youth Orthodox cultural center, a Patriarchal library, a reception

⁶⁵ https://meduza.io/news/2019/06/27/podgotovlena-strategiya-prevrascheniya-sergieva-posada-v-pravoslavnyy-vatikan-proekt-otsenivayut-v-140-milliardov-rublej?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=main&fbclid=IwAR14a418ZKaju-VCBt_ByE2jNvrxiq-0GAtG96URBCVE0eIcNeoua561aw

house, a high Church court, representative offices of Autocephalous churches, an Orthodox media center, a hotel, and so on. But it is clear that this is an attempt to win over the primacy in the Orthodox world. It should be recalled that in 2013 there was a discussion between Constantinople and Moscow on whether the ROC can claim the primacy⁶⁶. In 2014, the intellectual victory of the Ecumenical throne was obvious. But Moscow continues its attempts to increase its influence, including by increasing the scope of temple construction, cultural and artistic expansion. **“Just as the Kremlin has an obvious goal of the Empire restoration, the ROC is in tune with it - the transformation into the “second Vatican”, that is, the global religious and political center of attraction for the “Orthodox peoples” and for the “conservative pro-Putin international,”** Archbishop Eustratius Zorya commented on this news on his account. Let me remind you that in 1947 (then 1948), the ROC, with Stalin’s permission, was going to hold the “Eighth Ecumenical Council” in Moscow, where the Patriarch of Moscow was planned to be called “Ecumenical”. That would formally make him the “first”. That plan was discovered in time and thwarted by the Greek Churches led by the Patriarch of Constantinople Athenagoras. The “Council” turned into a “celebration of the 500th anniversary of autocephaly” and a “meeting of primates and representatives”. What they couldn’t do then, they want to do now...

“Just as the Kremlin has an obvious goal of the Empire restoration, the ROC is in tune with it – the transformation to the “second Vatican”, that is, the global religious and political center of attraction for the “Orthodox peoples” and for the “conservative pro-Putin international”

Moscow is also actively using legal mechanisms. The law, according to which the UOC-MP in Ukraine had to indicate in the name of the affiliation to the Moscow Patriarchate, that is, to show that the governing center of the Church is

located in the aggressor country, is suspended. This is a kind of masking operation that disorients Orthodox believers.

In the UOC-MP initiated criminal proceedings against the heads of Chernivtsi and Rivne regional state administrations for allegedly forced re-registration of its religious communities in the community of the OCU. This means that it questions the veracity of the transition of parishes and blocks their lives. Moreover, some adherents of the UOC-MP involve lawyers and write complaints to the SIB against SSU employees who are simply trying to fulfil their duties and restrain individual priests from going beyond the constitutional limits⁶⁷.

⁶⁶ <https://www.religion.in.ua/main/bogoslovya/24468-pervyj-bez-ravnyx-otvet-konstantinopolskogo-patriarxata-na-dokument-o-pervenstve-prinyatyj-v-moskovskom-patriarxate.html>

⁶⁷ <https://www.religion.in.ua/news/vazhlivo/43519-v-upce-mp-iniciyuvali-kriminalni-provadhzhennya-proti-goliv-cherniveckoyi-ta-rivnenskoyi-oblderzhadministracij.html>

In the Vinnytsia region, where the transition of parishes to the UOC was particularly active since the reputable Bishop of the UOC-MP Simeon took part in the Unification Council, the head of the Department for Nationalities and Religions of the Vinnytsia Regional State Administration Igor Saletsky had to participate in almost forty trials related to the transition of religious communities to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and was subject to four criminal proceedings inspired against him⁶⁸. Director of the Legal Department of the Ukrainian Centre Of International Humanitarian Programs, PhD, the author of the first in Ukraine thesis on religious security, Julia Fisun, believes that the plaintiffs chose an official from VinRSA to demonstrate to all managers, what could happen to them if they comply with the Law of Ukraine “On freedom of conscience and religious organizations” and promote establishment of the OCU⁶⁹. It is notable that the instrument of response from the UOC-MP to a public servant in the performance of his duties was the General Directorate of the National Police of Ukraine in Vinnytsia region, which in agreement with the procedural head of Prosecutor’s office of the region declared suspicion under article 356 of the criminal code – the arbitrariness and began to investigate⁷⁰.

Special attention should be paid to the activities of political and business conglomerates of the Russian-clerical direction with their own media resources, which are encouraged and controlled by Moscow. They are formed both at the regional level, forming an alliance with the local diocese, and at the central level. The goal is to create a long-term system of influence on both state authorities and the electorate, manipulating the feelings of believers, attracting them to their side by providing small financial assistance from time to time by piggybacking on regional business. The most illustrative examples are the Orthodox Deputy and businessman V. Novinsky in Kyiv, in the Mykolaiv and Kherson regions and a graduate of the FSB Academy, a member of the Inter-Council presence of the ROC A. Derkach in the Sumy region.

The characteristic of f. Oleksandr (Drabyenko) in relation to the UOC-MP is comprehensive: “Russian political scientists do not accidentally consider the UOC-MP as the most “Russian party” in Ukraine... Novinsky is, so to speak, an unofficial “Russian Ambassador” to Ukraine. But Vadym Novinsky is not just a Deputy and a Pro-Russian political figure. He is also the “main patron” of the UOC-MP, as he himself defined his role in the modern church”⁷¹.

⁶⁸ <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/2818472-igor-saleckij-nacalnik-upravlinna-u-spravah-nacionalnostej-ta-religij-vinnickoi-oda.html>

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ https://lb.ua/news/2017/01/07/355419_aleksandr_drabinko_upts.html.



In the photo from left to right: Metropolitan Onuphrius, Patriarch Kirill and Vadym Novinsky

The behaviour of the UOC-MP during the quarantine period with demonstrative disregard for quarantine measures and participation in the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II under the slogans of the Russian official propaganda “Victory in the Great Patriotic war” finally damasked the UOC-MP as a branch of the ROC. The latter, in turn, finally dissolved itself in the Kremlin’s neo-Imperial policy. The opinion of the religious expert Dmytro Gorevoy is remarkable: “Due to the coronavirus, religious figures very rarely appear in public now. Patriarch Kirill disappeared after Easter, and his subordinate, Metropolitan Onuphrius, even sooner. There is not even a photo or video report from his Easter service. However, both hierarchs came to the eternal fire to honour the Victory day. To be absent during religious holidays – such as Easter, Saint George the Victor, or the Myrrhophores, but to come to the eternal fire is the priority of the highest hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate.”

Having subordinated the ROC in the times of Putin, Kremlin relies on the UOC-MP as an agent of Russian-Imperial memory and traditions in Ukraine. Moscow understands that this church still retains a certain trust in Ukrainian society, especially in the East and South. Therefore, according to the conclusion of D. Gorevoy, because Pro-Russian politicians and activists have largely discredited themselves in Ukraine, those who do not believe Medvedchuk and Boyko will believe Metropolitan Onuphrius and Pavel. Of course, the media from the Russian Federation and Pro-Russian media will

convey the “word of truth” to Ukrainian voters in the next election so that they make a “right choice”.

Also, the focus is on the impact through the chain of the FSB – ROC – UOC-MP on the highest state leadership through faithful dignitaries who are already incorporated into the system of power, holding high positions in the SBU, the Office of the President of Ukraine. The change of the power team in Ukraine intensified attempts to shake the position of the new Church. For example, the first Deputy of the Office of the President of Ukraine Serhii Trofimov (a parishioner of the UOC-MP) looks like a performer of personnel claims of the hierarchs of the UOC-MP, although he refutes this.



In the photo: in the second row, Sergii Trofimov is on the right of m. Onuphrius, Vadym Novinsky – to the left⁷²

“Trofimov is an ardent parishioner of the Moscow Patriarchate, so to speak, an affiliate who maintains friendly relations and is in constant contact with Metropolitan Anthony (Pakanych) of the Moscow Church. It is rumoured that Trofimov consults with the Metropolitan even on political and personnel issues, in particular regarding

⁷² Source: <http://religionpravda.com.ua/2020/04/05/%D0%A3-%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B4%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8C%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BE-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%8F%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8F-%D0%9B%D0%B0%D0%B2%D1%80%D0%B8-%D0%BC%D0%B8%D1%82%D1%80/>.

the appointment of key leaders in regional administrations. And during Trofimov’s visits to the regions, Metropolitan Anthony organizes meetings with local bishops of his church” – this is the characteristic of the official of the Office of the President of Ukraine given by the News Agency Glavcom⁷³.

Indicative of the “neutrality” of the government in inter-church relations was the attack of the ROC- UOC-MP against the Head of the Department for Religious Affairs and national minorities Andrii Yurash – one of the participants in the work on Tomos. Due to his efforts, the Department of the Ministry of Culture should be transformed into a State Service of ethnic policy and freedom of conscience. Twice the competition for the head of the new service was won by Andrii Yurash. However, the first time the results of the competition were reset, and the second time, despite the highest score, A. Yurash was simply not approved for the position. According to the available insider information, the Cabinet of Ministers, which approves the candidate, was pressured by the Office of the President.

Thus, it can be summed up that **Russia, through the ROC and its branch in Ukraine – the UOC-MP, as well as agents of influence at various levels of power, conducts lawfare (using the term of American experts) against the UOC and the state of Ukraine, that is, exploits the internal legislation of the enemy state to its detriment**⁷⁴.

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⁷³ <https://glavcom.ua/country/society/mizhcerkovnu-politiku-pisatimut-scenaristi-95-kvartalu-660913.html>.

⁷⁴ <https://tyzhden.ua/World/223054>

4. RUSSIA’S INFORMATION INFLUENCE ON UKRAINE

4.1. Goals of Russia’s informational influence on Ukraine

The future of the Ukrainian state should be built by the political elite with an understanding of the fact that information is a resource of the power fight in the modern world. The state, which strives to preserve its sovereignty and independence, should pay attention to strengthening all four power components – economic, military, diplomatic, and informational⁷⁵.

At the strategic level, information warfare is carried out to destroy the enemy’s values, including replacing them with its own, destroy its resistance potential, and subordinate resources for their use in its own interests.

Information warfare is the toughest type of information struggle. There are no universally recognized legal and moral norms and restrictions on the ways and means of information warfare. They are limited by considerations of efficiency only. In information warfare, the entire spectrum of means is used, from the “dirtiest”, direct lies, to “subtle” ways of presenting information with truthful content. A common feature to the means of attack in information warfare is that they manipulate the mind⁷⁶.



⁷⁵ <https://delo.ua/opinions/informacionnaja-vojna-rossii-protiv-ukrainy-uroki-dlja-evropy-291526>

⁷⁶ https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%98%D0%BD%D1%84%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BC%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%8F_%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%B9%D0%BD%D0%B0

One of the main goals of any information war is to influence the enemy so that it makes decisions independently and without compulsion that benefit the other side⁷⁷. The main goal of the information war of Russia against Ukraine is the same as the entire Russian hybression is to return Ukraine into a zone of Russia’s geopolitical influence. For this, it needs to prevent cooperation and rapprochement of Ukraine with Western democracies and the latter’s entry into the European Union and NATO.

According to the competent authorities of Ukraine, **information operations (IO) against our country are carried out by:**

- Information Security Centre of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (on the territory of Ukraine);
- Division of the special measures of influence of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation (in the ORDLO territory and areas adjacent to the demarcation line in Ukraine);
- Division of the special measures of influence of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation (through third states).

The main tactical goals of the information operations of the FSB of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, according to the SSU counterintelligence, are:

- formation of a feeling of disillusionment and disbelief in the patriotic strata of the population, lack of prospects for the path chosen in 2004 and 2014 to Western democracy;
- strengthening of the pro-Russian population’s desire to resume dialogue with the Russian Federation on the terms imposed by the Kremlin;
- return of the territories occupied by the Russian Federation (except Crimea) to Ukraine on the terms imposed by the Kremlin and granting them the right to block any rapprochement of Ukraine with the EU and NATO;
- Ukraine’s refusal to return Crimea;
- change of the current Ukrainian government and political elite to a pro-Russian one.

The tactical goals of the information operations of Russian Military Intelligence Service in the occupied territories of Ukraine are as follows:

- formation of the population’s feeling that it is impossible to return to Ukraine under the current pro-Western course;
- formation of hatred towards the current Ukrainian government;
- formation of hatred towards the EU, NATO and the West as a whole;
- putting the blame for socio-economic issues on Ukraine;

⁷⁷ https://dt.ua/internal/sprava-vishinskogo-yak-dzerkalo-viyni-317290_.html

- creating a positive image of the Russian Federation and its leadership;
- promoting the integration of the occupied territories into the language, information and cultural space of Russia;
- **creating prerequisites for returning to Ukraine after the change of power to a pro-Russian one**⁷⁸.

The results of early parliamentary elections in Ukraine can serve a definite proof of the efficiency of Russian and pro-Russian propaganda. If you look at the detailed map of voting results for a multi-member electoral district⁷⁹, you can clearly see that even in those regions of Ukraine **where the Party “Sluha Narodu” (Servant of the People) won**, in many voting stations located near the border with the Russian Federation, and occupied by Russia Crimea or Moldova (where Russian propaganda is strong), **the openly pro-Russian Opposition Platform – For Life**, which was actively supported by the Russian media, won. Residents of the **border areas** of Sumy, Kharkiv, Kherson, and Odesa regions are in the zone of particularly active Russian information influence, where Russian TV channels and radio stations often prefer over Ukrainian ones.

4.2. Information special operations with the use of the mass media

In the seventh year of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine, it is already quite obvious that its information component is no less dangerous for the future of our country than Russian tanks. Information attacks do not take lives, but poison the minds of the citizens and distort public opinion. On the part of the Russian Federation, there is a large-scale information campaign aimed at establishing (restoring) control over Ukraine, keeping it in the zone of Russian influence, dispersion of Ukrainian statehood and preventing the actual liquidation of the Russian imperial project in this way. A number of informational special operations can be identified within the campaign.

A. Operation to blur Ukrainian identity

A1. Single people, one language, one culture

Language is the most indicative indicator of a person’s identity. Therefore, to prevent the formation/restoration of own identity in Ukraine, Russian makes fierce pressure to block the Ukrainization of the Ukrainian society. Former adviser to the President of Russia Andrey Illarionov claims that Vladimir Putin started the current war against Ukraine half a year before the occupation of Crimea. **The war began with language aggression during Putin’s visit to Kyiv on July 27, 2013. It was then that the Russian President, who used to say “in Ukraine”, switched to the**

⁷⁸ Personal interview with an SSU officer on condition of anonymity.

⁷⁹ <https://elections.dekoder.org/ukraine/ua>.

grammatical form “on Ukraine.” Soon, after Putin, Moscow Patriarch Kirill, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov and other Russian dignitaries and officials switched to using the “on Ukraine” form. This transition was to emphasize that Ukraine was just a geographical part of the Russian territory, where “Ukrainians” live, i.e. those who live “near the edge.”

The paradigm of activity in this direction was defined during numerous speeches made by V. Putin, in which he argued that the Ukrainians are an artificially created nation, which never existed historically, that the Ukrainian language is a dialect of Russian, and that Ukrainian culture is a part of the Russian culture. In this direction, information materials were actively distributed, events were held, and pro-Russian Ukrainian politicians made speeches. The most odious in that was Vadym Novinsky. As an example of such activity, he, along with 50 other people’s deputies of Ukraine (mainly representatives of the Opposition Bloc), made a submission to the Constitutional Court of Ukraine regarding the determination of the constitutionality of the law of Ukraine “On ensuring the functioning of the Ukrainian language as the state language.”

A2. Common history

For the successful existence of the Russian imperial project, the beliefs about its own greatness and significance shall be created. Due to absence in the modern history of Russia of the facts and events that could be interpreted in this way and identify Russia as a superpower (the low standard of living of the vast majority of the

The war began with language aggression during Putin’s visit to Kyiv on July 27, 2013. It was then that the Russian President, who used to say “in Ukraine”, switched to the grammatical form “on Ukraine.” Soon, after Putin, Moscow Patriarch Kirill, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov and other Russian dignitaries and officials switched to using the “on Ukraine” form. This transition emphasizes that Ukraine is just a geographical part of the Russian territory, where “Ukrainians” live, i.e. those who live “near the edge.”

population compared to the leading countries of the world, the low technological level, its economy based mainly on primary resources, dependence on prices and volumes of oil and gas supplies abroad), the victory in World War II was chosen to create an image of greatness and pride of Russians for their country (in Russia it is the victory in the Great Patriotic War). The cult of the “Great Victory” is strongly spread by Russia to all countries of the former USSR, including Ukraine, and the departure from the paradigm of coverage of the events of the World War II is interpreted as “fascism” and condemned. Thus, the Russian Federation is trying to pre-

vent Ukraine from creating its own national view of historical events, and forming a national vision of history as the basis for Ukrainian national identity.

In Ukraine, following the example of Russian events, Soviet films on military themes are shown, festive concerts with the performance of Soviet war and songs of later periods (Inter TV Channel, NTN, Inter-Film), “immortal regiment” actions and so on are carried out.

A3. Orthodox unity

According to the results of a number of studies, it can be argued that Ukrainians are one of the most religious nations in Europe – more than 75% of the population of Ukraine consider themselves believers, more than 90% of whom consider themselves Christians. Although there are far fewer active parishioners, the Church enjoys a much higher level of trust among the population than any other institutions in the country. For the formation of national identity, the existence of a recognized canonical national Church is of fundamental importance, and the conduct of services in the Ukrainian language rather ensures its introduction into all spheres of life in the country.

Therefore, the issue of discrediting the idea of creating a national Autocephalous Church in Ukraine and its recognition by other churches is very important for the Russian Federation in terms of preventing the formation of Ukrainian identity.

Russia has never stopped its opposition to the creation of the OCU. A significant role in this was played by R. Akhmetov’s partner V. Novinsky, who acts both as a channel for publishing biased and manipulative information, and a sponsor of certain events (processions, foreign visits, etc.).

These processes are actively covered by the News Agency “Union of Orthodox Journalists” (UOJ), established in 2015. This organization on its own website posts engaged and openly fake messages aimed at discrediting the OCU, inflating the confrontation between believers of different faiths, and it is actually the mouthpiece of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC (UOC-MP). It also has its own channel on the YouTube, where the number of official supporters is about 34.5 thousand users, although some materials posted there have over 130 thousand views.

The background for the successful conduct of these special operations is created through the expansion of the Russian mass culture, primarily television production. Before the Revolution of Dignity, the production of high-quality television product in Ukraine was under full control of Russia. Now Ukrainian TV series are shot in small numbers. Most of them are actually copies of the Russian product and many Ukrainian TV series are produced in Russian, so that it is actually

difficult to determine the country of origin and the place where the film takes place. This way the borders between the countries are blurred and the Russian way of life and thinking is imposed, and a non-Ukrainian identity is formed.

Through the series, the target audience gets a sense of second-rate Ukraine and its subordination to Russia. Separately, we should define the Star Media company, founded in 2006 by a former producer of the Inter TV Channel Vlad Ryashin in Russia (the movies company also has its headquarters in Ukraine and the UK). The company produces about 600 hours of series, TV movies and feature films annually. In General, the Company’s library exceeds 5,000 hours of product with high-quality videos and voice acting, which attracts the viewer’s attention. The company has an official channel on YouTube where the number of official supporters exceeded 1 million users. Almost every Ukrainian Internet user can easily get acquainted with the content of this company.

The actual direction of the company’s activity is to create a favourable interpretation of the Russian history, first of all, the post-Soviet countries, and the formation of Russian (Soviet) identity in the former USSR countries. For this purpose, a large number of “historical” TV movies are being made on the subject of the history of the Russian state, Kyivan Rus, the World War II, and so on. It produces TV series about the life of historical figures of the Soviet era combined with the exponential forms of Soviet life, and this forms a favourable for the current Russian leadership attitude to the Soviet past, in which there was no deficit, queues, punitive psychiatry and other negative aspects of life. They show only that version of reality, which makes the older generation nostalgic and forms the idealistic view of the Soviet era for the younger. It forms post-Soviet (Russian) identity, complicates (makes impossible) the formation of national identity, and creates the prerequisites for further dissemination of the ideas of Russian World (Russky Mir).

B. Creation of the image of Ukraine as a failed state

As part of this operation, measures are being taken to discredit the top military and political leadership of Ukraine, accuse them in corruption, and demonstrate inability of governmental institutions to solve urgent problems of their own people. Ukraine is presented as an unreliable international partner that does not fulfil its obligations. Ukrainian politicians are shown as dependent on external influence, etc.

C. Provoking mass riots

As part of this operation, by using created pro-Russian networks (mainly social networks in different regions of Ukraine), which act according to the common idea and the plan of their RF curators, information materials of a destructive nature are

distributed, mass actions of disobedience (including under patriotic slogans) are provoked, and new supporters are actively attracted.

Another direction in this operation can be defined as instigating regional separatism in Ukraine. As an example, the attempts to create the so-called “Bessarabia People’s Republic” in 2015 on the territory of several districts of the Odesa region can be cited. Due to the timely actions of the SSU, those attempts were stopped, and the persons who were most active in those actions were either convicted or expelled from the country.

D. Disinformation operation concerning crimes committed by the Russian Federation in the territory of Ukraine

As part of this operation, information campaigns are being conducted aimed at creating a stable belief both in Ukraine, Russia and the world community regarding the Russian Federation’s non-involvement in unleashing armed aggression against Ukraine, presenting it as a purely internal conflict, and evading responsibility for crimes against humanity committed by the Russian troops. There are several informational actions: “ikhtamnet” (they are not there) - there are no Russian troops in the territory of Ukraine, the destruction of MH-17 flight – as a crime of the Ukrainian military, and objections to the illegality of Russia’s actions to attack and capture Ukrainian boats in the Black Sea near the Kerch Strait on November 25, 2018.

The main goal of the actions in this operation is to create a belief, first of all among the population of Russia and Ukraine, in the non-involvement of the Russian Federation in military aggression against Ukraine, to present it as a “civil war,” to influence the international community to deprive Ukraine of international support, prevent international organizations and courts from making decisions accusing the Russian Federation of unleashing armed aggression and committing war crimes.

E. Charges of war crimes against Ukraine.

Every day, information resources of quasi-state entities in the occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (the so-called “L/DPR”) publish information materials, in which the Armed Forces of Ukraine are accused of violating the Minsk agreements, using heavy weapon systems, firing at civilians and using ammunition prohibited by international agreements and conventions (for example, “phosphorus” ammunition, although such types of ammunition were not used by the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and the facts of their use by the Russian occupation troops on the positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were recorded). After posting such messages on the “L/DPR” information resources, they are distributed on the Central channels of the Russian Federation with the corresponding links, in the publics in

social networks. They are brought into the information space of Ukraine when pro-Russian media distribute such information or links to Russian media, or publish them as own content. In fact, such content does not differ from the one fabricated by the occupiers.

F. Operation of information coercion to make the decisions necessary for Russia.

As part of this operation, information campaigns and actions are constantly carried out, in the course of which the narratives, fake news, contradictory research or expert opinions are thrown into the information space. They are aimed at changing public opinion in general and changing the opinion of persons authorized to make certain decisions to one beneficial to Russia. Usually, such actions are carried out on the eve of international visits, consideration of cases in the international courts, where the Russian Federation is the defendant, the conclusion of interstate or trade agreements that, in the opinion of the Russian Federation, pose a threat to its interests, etc. For example, we can consider an information campaign to promote Russian interests in the gas sector.

On March 22, 2019, the contract of the Chairman of Naftogaz of Ukraine NJSC Andriy Kobolyev ended. On the same day, Viktor Medvedchuk and Yuri Boyko visited Moscow, where they met Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and Gazprom’s CEO Alexey Miller. During the meeting, the issues of resuming direct supplies of Russian gas to Ukraine and the price for it were discussed. This meeting was covered by pro-Russian TV Channels in Ukraine. Through manipulation, the opinion was formed that it was not economically feasible for Ukraine to buy gas at European prices and that the price offered by Gazprom was much lower, which in fact did not correspond to the real state of things. But with a link to the message of the TV Channel 112 Ukraine, information with the above narratives was replicated by a number of resources in Ukraine and the Russian Federation to form public opinion in favour of resuming cooperation with Gazprom.

The goals of these informational events within the framework of such promotion could be defined as follows:

1. To create support among the pro-Russian electorate in Ukraine for Yurii Boyko, whose election as President of Ukraine would reduce the price of gas and utility tariffs in Ukraine.
2. To use disagreements in the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine regarding the extension of the contract with the CEO of Naftogaz of Ukraine and lobby the appointment of the person who would accept the agreement with the Russian

Federation announced during the above mentioned meeting to preserve gas transit through Ukraine after January 1, 2020 and receive the “discount” for gas announced by Dmitry Medvedev.

3. To persuade Ukraine and Naftogaz refuse legal claims against Gazprom in the international courts. On June 5, the information space of Ukraine and the Russian Federation actively disseminated the statement of Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev, made after talks with the Prime Minister of Slovakia, Peter Pellegrini, that one of the conditions for continuing gas transit through Ukraine is Kyiv’s refusal from legal disputes over gas.

Thus, it is possible to observe the active information of the Russian Federation on formation of the necessary to Russia behaviours of Ukrainian officials, public opinion in Ukraine (the Ukrainians overpay for gas by half – Boyko and Medvedchuk can negotiate a lower price – Russia is ready to sell cheap gas – we have to agree – the current government does not care about the people). Due to pressure of the Ukrainian society on the one hand and the EU officials on the other hand (the impression that Russia is ready to make concessions, but the unwavering position of Ukraine will lead to another gas crisis in Europe – pressure shall be put on Ukraine and Nord Stream 2 shall be started) Ukraine shall be forced to accept the RF disadvantageous offers.

It should be noted that the Russian side eventually managed to achieve partial success, although much later. During a meeting in the Normandy format in Paris on December 9, 2019, the Ukrainian side agreed to the lifting of Naftogaz’s legal claims against Gazprom for USD 12.2 billion.

The case of Kirill Vyshynsky, head of the Russian News Media Agency’s Division in Ukraine, is indicative both from the point of view of how the Russian propaganda machine works from inside Ukraine, and from the point of view of material and financial support. He was arrested by the SSU in May 2018 on charges of creating a subversive pro-Russian information network in Ukraine and treason. In September 2019, he was exchanged for Ukrainian political prisoners from the “Sentsov List.” His services to Russia and work in Russia are eloquently proven by the state awards of the Russian Federation, handed him by the secret decrees of the Russian President in 2014 – the Medal of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation “For the Return of Crimea” and the order “For Merits to the Fatherland.” According to the assessment of Viktor Kononenko, ex-Deputy Head of the SSU, it was established and documented that in the spring of 2014 Vyshynsky was assigned to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to conduct subversive information actions. It was he and the journalists under his control who produced materials that justified

the annexation of Crimea and the unification of Crimea with Russia”⁸⁰. Ensuring the large-scale activities of the Ukrainian branch of the main propaganda mouthpiece of the Kremlin was carried out according to the scheme below (Fig. 9).

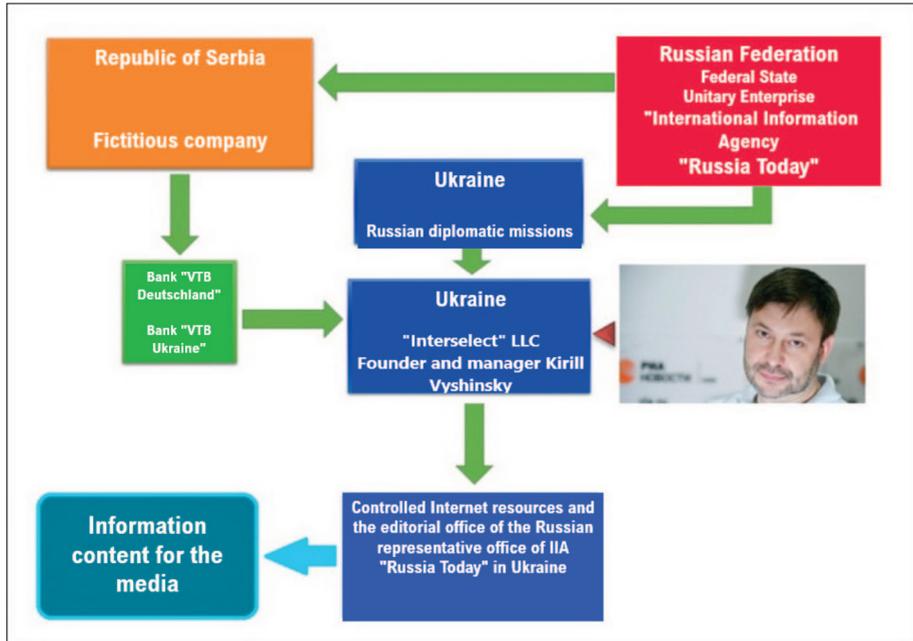


Fig. 9. Work algorithm of the Russian Propaganda Agency MIA “News” in Ukraine under the leadership of K. Vyshinsky⁸¹.

Every month, the Serbian firm SPN Media Solutions sent 53 thousand Euros to Vyshinsky’s company «Interselect.» According to the SSU, that money was of Russian origin and was used for the activities of RIA Novosti-Ukraine. For 3 years – from February 2014 to April 2018, almost 2,135 million Euros were received from the Serbian company⁸². The peculiarity of the scheme is the use of fictitious companies and branches of Russian banks for transferring funds. The banks have European registration and, according to the plan, should not arouse suspicion from the Ukrainian special services. This is a common pattern of Russian intelligence agencies working with the agents outside of Russia.

⁸⁰ <https://ms.detector.media/manipulyatsii/post/23424/2019-09-01-khto-takii-kirilo-vishinskii-za-yakogo-risiya-viddala-sentsova/>

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

4.3. Narratives of pro-Russian information flows

Through the controlled media, Internet resources, individual journalists, politicians, bloggers and trolls, the security services of the aggressor country are persistently trying to impose to the Ukrainians **the main message – the “Ukraine” project did not occur**, Ukraine is a failed state, and Ukrainians can survive only through rapprochement with Russia and close cooperation with it.

According to the estimates of the relevant SSU structures, the Russian special services, with the help of their Ukrainian henchmen, create a virtual reality in the information space of Ukraine, in which:

- Ukraine does not have its own history. Kyivan Rus is the beginning of the Russian state, not the Ukrainian one;
- the Ukrainian people is a part of Russia, and Russians love their Ukrainian brothers very much;
- unity with Russia is the only chance for the survival of the Slavic peoples, whose destruction and enslavement are sought by the Anglo-Saxons and world Freemasonry;
- all Western neighbours of Ukraine – Romania, Poland, Hungary and even Slovakia are hatching insidious plans to seize Ukrainian territories and dismember our state;
- Europe is rotting and dying because of political correctness, tolerance and the spread of LGBT;
- Ukrainians are lost sheep, the modern Ukrainian political elite, which chose the Western path, is simply “sick”, being infected by the Western special services with the viruses of westernization and nationalism;
- the project named “Ukraine” is nearing completion⁸³.

These topics, beloved by Russian “knights of fakes and provocations”, should be added by the following:

- power in Ukraine was seized by “fascists” and “nationalists”;
- **a civil war continues in Ukraine;**
- Russia is providing huge assistance to the victims of “Kyiv fascist junta” in Donbas;
- absolute Russophobia reigns in Ukraine and the Russian-speaking minority is being persecuted;
- there is an attack on freedom of speech and persecution of opposition journalists in Ukraine;

⁸³ Personal interview with an SSU officer on condition of anonymity.

- in Europe, “no one is waiting for Ukraine”, “Europe is tired of Ukraine”, and the signed Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU is not just unprofitable, but destructive one for the Ukrainian economy;
- the creation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine with the receipt of autocephaly and Tomos is a split of Orthodoxy in favour of the “overseas owners” of the Kyiv authorities and the creation of a “Turkish Protectorate” in Ukraine;
- Ukraine is a place where secret biological laboratories of the USA are located, where dangerous experiments with viruses are conducted.

As a rule, most of the thematic variations of Russian narratives fit into the above-listed ones. In the published by the Ministry of Information Policy in 2018 “The White Book of Special Information Operations against Ukraine 2014-2018”, it is proposed to consider them as a kind of series⁸⁴. This model was chosen by analysts for the obvious high degree of efficiency of the Russian narratives and disinformation techniques due to their repetition in the media: objects of disinformation are constantly told the same stories, making them more interesting and more “exotic” each time.

It seems that, like the characters of TV series, there are always people on TV channels who, due to their appearance on pro-Russian channels and citing in the Russian media, represent the main lobbying potential of the Russian Federation in Ukraine: ex-Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of the fugitive President V. Yanukovich A. Portnov, ex-Minister of Justice of the Yanukovich’s times O. Lukash, ex-Minister of Transport Y. Chervonenko, representatives of the top of OPZZh V. Medvedchuk, Y. Boyko, S. Lyovochkin, V. Rabinovich, N. Korolevska, N. Shufrych, Y. Pavlenko, O. Voloshyn and others. “Expert” support is provided by a number of marginal political scientists and those who have been in the service of pro-Russian owners of the media groups for a long time. To give them “European solidity” and create the illusion of authority in the European political circles, to increase the confidence of Ukrainians in both pro-Russian politicians from OPZZh and the Russian vision of the Ukraine’s future, three European MPs were appointed to the “International Editorial Boards” of 112 Ukraine and NewsOne TV Channels. Nathan Gill, David Coburn and Arne Gericke are not only well-known euro-sceptics, but also long-time fans of Putin’s Russia, who transfer its messages to Europe, and now to Ukraine.

⁸⁴The book of special information operations of Ukraine 2014–2018. URL:http://mip.gov.ua/files/pdf/white_book_2018_mip.pdf.

4.4. Conclusions

The efficiency of Russian information influences and the effectiveness of the Kremlin’s information and political lobby in Ukraine are evidenced by the growing number of Ukrainians who believe that Ukraine started the war in Donbas, and those who believe that ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking citizens are being persecuted in Ukraine, and the results of extraordinary parliamentary elections, during which pro-Russian forces in total gained 18.3% of the votes⁸⁵, and the party, which is openly oriented towards Moscow – Opposition Platform – For Life, received the second-largest faction in the Parliament of Ukraine.

To spread its narratives in the Ukrainian information space, Russia actively uses Ukrainian and Western politicians, political scientists, journalists and social activists. Currently, the most active promoters of Kremlin ideas in the Ukrainian information space are pro-Russian politicians – “front men” of two political forces – the Opposition Platform – For Life and the Opposition Bloc – Party for Peace and Development.

In addition to Ukrainian agents of influence and public opinion leaders, the Russian Federation actively attracts European politicians, especially the members of the European Parliament, to spread its propaganda in Ukraine. The main task of the use of European MPs by Moscow is to introduce Kremlin ideas in Ukraine through Europe, which is much more trusted by a large part of the population of our country than in Russia.

Currently, one of the main tasks of the Kremlin is to impose on Kyiv its “peace plan” for the settlement in the Donbas, published by Putin’s good man Medvedchuk. Russia has formed a pool of MPs who participated in its information dumping and operations. Comments from European politicians who are sympathetic to Russia help Ukrainian pro-Russian media manipulate information and present to viewers the statements of **individual** European speakers as the opinion of **the entire** European Parliament, the European Union, Europe, or even the West as a whole.

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⁸⁵ <https://www.cvk.gov.ua/pls/vnd2019/wp300pt001f01=919.html>

The main message of the Kremlin in the information war against our country is the “failure of the project named “Ukraine”, the failure of the state of Ukraine, and the possibility of Ukrainians’ survival only through rapprochement with Russia and close cooperation with it.”

Central Ukrainian TV channels remain the top source of information for the absolute majority of our country’s citizens: 74% of Ukrainians receive information about events in Ukraine and the world mainly from national TV channels. The Russian Federation communicates its numerous fakes and anti-Ukrainian narratives to Ukrainian citizens through both Russian and Ukrainian-registered mass media, and through social networks.

Ukrainian TV platform for transmission of Kremlin’s narratives is quite impressive: two of the three national TV channels – the leaders of audience sympathy – *Ukraine* and *Inter* belong to major businessmen (R. Akhmetov and the Firtash-Lyovochkin tandem, respectively), who do not hide their loyal attitude to the Russian Federation and support the idea of bringing our country closer to Russia. The years of 2018-2019 were marked by the “medvedchukization” of Ukrainian television. Three leading news channels – NewsOne, 112 Ukraine and ZIK – were acquired by T. Kozak, a close associate of Viktor Medvedchuk, Putin’s good man and the most prominent and influential conductor of Kremlin ideas in Ukraine.

The most frequent guests of the studios of these channels are the politicians from the pro-Russian OPZZh and the Opposition Bloc, which messages and the messages of a pool of “scientists” and “experts” often duplicate or are variations of the main narratives the Russian propaganda in the information war against Ukraine. These TV channels often manipulate information, distorting even the meaning of the publications from Western media and analytical centers they quote.

Although the popularity of radio is inferior to television, its influence on the average Ukrainian should not be underestimated. Millions of drivers and public transport passengers listen to the radio every day. Although there are no openly pro-Russian radio stations in Ukraine, unlike television, pro-Russian content is present on both music and entertainment radio stations and informative and varied-speech ones.



In the Ukrainian information space, *Vesti* newspaper is the only national periodical, which media experts’ position as the main distributor of pro-Russian messages in Ukrainian print media. Nevertheless, elements of this content are found in other publications. At the regional level, print media have not been seen actively spreading pro-Russian narratives. However, during the parliamentary and presidential election campaigns, these publications increased the citation of politicians, whose statements are often in tune with the messages of the Russian propaganda.

According to the data of the March 2019 poll⁸⁶, social networks are the top source of information for 23.5% of Ukrainians. 74% of active Ukrainian social network users choose Facebook. Since the beginning of the Russian hybrid aggression, the activities of Russian special services in the Ukrainian segment of this social network have become more sophisticated and deeper. Russian trolls, who grew fake accounts several years deep, are already infiltrating into closed thematic Ukrainian groups, masquerading as Ukrainian citizens, creating allegedly patriotic groups, which later begin to publish content of narratives of the Russian propaganda. During the two election campaigns of 2019, Russians actively rented Ukrainian Facebook accounts for political advertising and promotion of anti-Ukrainian content. According to the

⁸⁶ <https://detector.media/infospace/article/164308/2019-03-21-dzherela-informatsii-mediagramotnist-i-rosiiska-propaganda-rezultati-vseukrainskogo-opituvannya-gromadskoi-dumki/>

plan of the Russian special services, involving the residents of Ukraine in the distribution of destructive materials allows them adapting such for the citizens of our country and creating the illusion of “truthfulness” of the messages.

Passive perception of information makes YouTube video hosting popular in Ukraine, and among users around the world. The domestic segment of the service significantly grew due to the activity of both the audience and content creators. Both in the countries of Europe, America and Asia, and Ukraine, the Russian Federation seeks to influence public opinion and impose its vision of the situation in our country through YouTube. The influence of YouTube on the minds of Ukrainians can be evidenced by the unexpected relative success in the parliamentary elections of a registered 1.5 months before the voting day pseudo-party of Ukraine-phobic blogger A. Shariy, who has been living abroad for several years.

Unlike Facebook and YouTube, other social networks, including Google+, Tumblr, Twitter, Telegram, Instagram, LiveJournal, LinkedIn, etc. are less popular in Ukraine. However, in the last year in Ukraine, anonymous Telegram channels have become popular (Resident, DarkKnight, Legitimate, Scout, Whisperer, Onion, Bearded Grandmother, Shadow Anonymous, and other). They often spread pro-Russian narratives, and some of them are associated with the Deputy Head of the Office of the President Kyrylo Tymoshenko. It is, in particular, the Resident Telegram channel.

After Kyiv’s decision in 2017 to block VKontakte and Odnoklassniki, Ukrainian users are gradually leaving these Russian online platforms. However, their Ukrainian segment still has millions of participants. Therefore, Moscow actively uses these and other social networks to conduct information and psychological operations to undermine the situation in Ukraine.

The data of the March 2019 opinion poll shows that Internet sites are the main source of information for 27.5% of Ukrainian citizens and rank second after television. However, in terms of coverage and popularity, they are significantly inferior to the top TV channels. At the same time, there are quite a large number of pro-Russian media in the Ukrainian segment of the Internet.

Among the top ten Ukrainian sites, the most visited by Ukrainians, some to various degrees can be considered as distributors of Russian narratives. These are Strana.UA, Gordonua.com, Korrespondent.net and Znaj.UA. These sites often use Russian Internet resources and news agencies as sources of primary information, in particular about international and even Ukrainian news. Also, these sites often publish information about internal events in Russia, imposing the Russian agenda on their readers, and thus the consumer of such information is constantly in the Russian information field.

The resonant interviews of the owner of Gordon.ua with Natalia Poklonskaya and Igor Girkin became a clear confirmation of Russia’s use of Ukrainian media resources to provoke conflict situations in the society and distort the information space. Well-known Ukrainian journalist Vitaliy Portnikov gave a clear description of this phenomenon: “This is a common reformatting of the information space in Ukraine. And I must say that Dmytro Gordon is not a player in this reformatting, but its tool. He may not even understand this, because not everyone can understand his/her role in certain events” [87]. The Russian secret services work exactly according to this method. They use people who will not fully understand their role in certain processes.

In an effort to shake the situation in Ukraine, Moscow actively uses ethnic minorities - Hungarians, Poles, Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, and other to destabilize it. Russian special services also manipulate the situation with national minorities in our country to discredit Kyiv in the eyes of the international community.

The differences in mentality, religious specifics and historical development of various peoples inhabiting Ukraine, Kyiv’s minimal attention to their socio-economic and national problems, and the low level of trust of national minorities in the Central authorities provide Russian special services and pro-Russian politicians with ample opportunities for manipulation and disinformation, creating a constant zone of turbulence. One of the areas of work on rocking the situation is the strengthening of separatist sentiments.

Civil society responds most quickly to threats in the Ukrainian information space. In 2014, the volunteers were the first to engage in an informational confrontation with the Kremlin, launching independent to the state projects to counter Russian propaganda and inform Ukrainian citizens and the international community about the Russian-Ukrainian war, tracking Russian propaganda, exposing fakes, blocking websites of pro-Russian separatists and their accounts.

The state is also taking measures to protect the information space approving the “Information Security Doctrine”, partially restoring Ukrainian broadcasting along the demarcation line in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as the Kherson regions on the border with Crimea, setting quotas for the Ukrainian language on radio and television, limiting the broadcast of a dozen of Russian TV channels, blocking some Russian websites and social networks.

Introduced in 2017 and 2018 by presidential decrees, the NSDC’s decisions to block Russian social networks, TV channels and websites caused a mixed reaction in Ukrainian society. The bans provoked criticism from media organizations. Two years after the start of the implementation of the decision of the National Security and Defence Council to block Russian sites, we can only state their partial effec-

tiveness due to the use of VPN programs by Ukrainians to gain access to blocked resources and abundant quoting by Ukrainian pro-Russian media of the content of Russian resources, which are under sanctions. Despite the insufficient effectiveness of the restrictive measures against Russian Internet resources, introduced during the presidency of P. Poroshenko, the government elected in 2019 is not going to cancel them yet, as per May 2020. Zelenskyy extended the ban on Russian social networks and Internet services.

To effectively counter the threats from Russia in the information sphere, it is important to constantly review legislation, adapting it to new conditions. To date, the security of the information space of Ukraine is not sufficiently covered by law. The Information Security Doctrine, developed with the participation of the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine (MIP), is extremely necessary under conditions of a hybrid war, but has not become a guide to action through the weak institutional capacity of the Ministry for the formation and implementation of state information policy. Reorganization of MIP to the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy has not led to changes in the work in the information field.

The National Council for Television and Radio Broadcasting has legally limited opportunities to protect the information space of Ukraine: the current legislation does not allow the National Council depriving broadcasters of licenses. Only the court has the right to do so, and the Regulator itself can issue a warning or impose a fine.

Another legislative problem in the field of information security is the lack of transparency in the ownership of Ukrainian media. Adopted in 2015, a law requiring broadcasting companies to publish on their websites and provide the information about their owners to the National Council on Television and Broadcasting does not solve this problem.

Ukrainian legislation does not sufficiently prescribe the rules that determine which elements of the work of mass media pose a threat to national security. In the context of Russia’s hybrid war against Ukraine, this must be done while addressing the problem facing any democratic society – how to achieve a balance between respecting freedom of speech and protecting national security.

One of the main features of information operations of Russian special services in Ukraine is their conduct, mainly within the framework of Ukrainian legislation. Russia uses the achievements of democracy as its weaknesses in the democratic states where it conducts information operations. If Ukraine begins to significantly change its legislation, making it more stringent in the sphere of rights and freedoms, there is a great danger of sliding into authoritarianism or even dictatorship.

Not only legislative but also a number of technical problems weaken the information security of Ukraine. After a significant part of the telecommunications infrastructure in ORDLO and Crimea was captured by the occupier, Ukraine has been able to launch only four TV towers for 6 years of Russian aggression. To this day, Ukrainian television and radio broadcasting has not been restored in a significant part of the territory of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Despite the existence of technical capabilities and the creation by Ukrainian specialists of a unique system for jamming hostile ether “Serpanok”, Ukraine has not yet managed to completely mute the “voices” of the aggressor country in its bordering areas.

According to experts, **Ukraine has already information-wise lost Crimea, the “DPR” and “LPR”, which watch and listen to Russia and live its agenda. Moreover, today our country seriously risks informationally losing its residents in the border area on the territory controlled by Ukraine, if it does not urgently and seriously address the problem of insufficient coverage of these territories by the Ukrainian signal.**

Ukraine has already information-wise lost Crimea, the “DPR” and “LPR”, which watch and listen to Russia and live its agenda. Moreover, today our country seriously risks informationally losing its residents in the border area on the territory controlled by Ukraine, if it does not urgently and seriously address the problem of insufficient coverage of these territories by the Ukrainian signal.

5. AFTERWORD

The processes, which we are witnessing now in Ukraine, are the result of the formation of a close to critical mass of agents of the Russian influence in the state institutions and that the top state leadership follows the Russian algorithm for solving the problem of the “war in Donbas.” Direct contacts between the President and his close circles and the Russian leadership at the meeting in the “Normandy Format” (N4) in December 2019 in Paris and unofficial contacts in Oman in January 2020 allowed the Russians to reprogram Ukraine’s “leadership module” for the “peaceful” solution in Donbas.

The main destructive processes for Ukraine are caused by Russia’s intensification of old and creation of new contours of external governance of the country, the activities of which lead to growing chaos, uncertainty and tensions in the society, as well as dysfunction of power in Ukraine, which is intensified in the conditions of the quarantine measures and post-quarantine political activity. The shock for the society was the resumption of electricity imports from Russia and Belarus on July 1, 2019. Immediately after the presidential elections in Ukraine, under the influence of the oligarchic group’s lobbying efforts, the import of cheaper electricity from Russia and Belarus was lobbied by the newly elected Deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. The phenomenon of “gerusification” took place at the time when the movement had to take place in the opposite direction, both in the context of the impossibility of imports from the aggressor country and in the context of energy security and the movement towards full independence from the post-Soviet energy system and integration to the European one.

Activities, which have been happening since the beginning of 2020, correspond to the basic 4-step algorithm of non-linear processes, used for hybrid technologies of waging wars, which is described by the Centre for Global Studies Strategy XXI in the work “Wars XXI: Russia’s Polyhybression” (<https://geostrategy.org.ua/en/component/k2/item/1561-kniga-viyni-xxi-poligibresiya-rosiyi>), published in 2017. That algorithm was effectively tested during the Crimean special operation of the Russian Federation from February 20 to March 28, 2014.

Now the template of the 4-step algorithm is used again, but no longer in relation to a particular region, but in relation to the whole country with a longer period of time. Once again, Russia uses a template of creating a critical mass of personnel through promotion of various agents to key positions in the system of the top state leadership, the national security and defense sphere, law enforcement agencies and the information sphere. This template proved its effectiveness when Yanukovich was in power.

1st step: False-target programming of the enemy through the “cooperation model”, under cover of which a program of its cryptodestruction is realized. Politically, Zelenskyy was imposed an election platform in the forms of viral formulas - “we did not start this war, but we have to end it”, “we just need to stop shooting”, “meet in the middle”, “remove people of war from power”, which formed his position before and after the elections and dictated his personnel policy.

These formulas are advantageous in terms of targeted programming in the struggle for votes, because there are no people in Ukraine who do not want peace. But few people would agree to the peace on the terms of capitulation to the aggressor and are ready to accept the peace in exchange for Ukraine’s loss of statehood. Falseness of the targeted programming lies here. **By considering the achievement of peace that is desired by the whole society as a goal, the chosen way to achieve this is absolutely supposedly simple and obvious, but wrong. The goal of achieving peace was subtly replaced by the goal of unilaterally ceasefire. This technology of the false-targeted programming was laid down by the aggressor’s political technologists through agents of influence.**

As a result, this has led to questionable staff appointments, which have resulted in incompetent people who are either completely loyal to the President or ready to follow all his instructions, or committed to restoring “fraternal” relations with Russia. Both are used by Russia to promote the agents of influence, gradually transforming the Ukrainian power into a power that will later have to give birth to the UkrSSR 2.0.

All this leads to disorientation of the society and foreign partners regarding the further policy of Ukraine in counteracting Russian aggression. Now we are witnessing how Russia transferred the special operation against Ukraine to the second step of the algorithm. This happened after V. Zelenskyy’s secret visit to Oman in January 2020 and, as the media suggested, his meetings with unknown Kremlin envoys there.

2nd step: Transformation of certainties and statuses into a cluster of uncertainties, destruction, chaotization. Erosion of the certainty of state policy and the acquisition of uncertainty are formed in several directions – internal policy, economy, foreign policy.

By considering the achievement of peace that is desired by the whole society as a goal, the chosen way to achieve this is absolutely supposedly simple and obvious, but wrong. The goal of achieving peace was subtly replaced by the goal of unilaterally ceasefire. This technology of the false-targeted programming was laid down by the aggressor’s political technologists through agents of influence.

1. There is a sharp increase in the dynamics of the Russian side after the Munich Security Conference on February 15, 2020. The “12 Steps toward Greater Security in Ukraine and the Euro-Atlantic Region” were announced in Munich, stating that “a new, inclusive national dialogue across Ukraine is desirable and could be launched as soon as possible.” Indicative points are several of these 12 steps, which reveal Russia’s authorship of this plan, hidden behind the international circle of signatories, in which, among other things, there are a free trade zone between Ukraine and Russia, a possibility of gradual lifting of sanctions against Russia and launching an all-Ukrainian nationwide dialogue on Ukraine’s new identity, which takes into account the views of Ukraine’s neighbors, including Russia.

The purpose of this document is to transfer international efforts from resolution of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict into a format of resolving an “internal civil conflict in Ukraine” and to blur Russia’s image as an aggressor country. It is logical that after that the idea of the so-called National Platform for Reconciliation and Unity could become relevant in Ukraine. It is worth recalling that it was supposed to be presented immediately after the Munich Security Conference on February 19, 2020, but was postponed, and the idea finally failed under the public pressure.

2. On March 6, 2020, newly appointed Prime Minister D. Shmygal made contradictory statements about the resumption of water supply from the Dnipro River to occupied Crimea (practically repeating the theses of the leader of the parliamentary faction “Sluha Narodu” D. Arahamia) that blurred Ukraine’s clear state position on impossibility of water supply till complete de-occupation of the peninsula.

3. On March 10, 2020, in the absence of reaction from the leadership of the state, the group of deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine headed by Putin’s crony V. Medvedchuk paid a visit to Moscow to form a “parliamentary dimension of the Normandy format” to assist heads of state in “peaceful conflict resolution in Ukraine”. In this way, the status of Russia as an aggressor country is eroded through the parliamentary format, giving it the status of a peace mediator.

4. On March 11, 2020, a number of events took place simultaneously. The Council of the Federation of the Russian Federation approved a law recognizing the citizens of Belarus and Ukraine as native speakers of the Russian language. This status gives them the opportunity to obtain Russian citizenship in a simplified manner. In other words, this means an additional erosion of Ukrainian identity with the imposition of a dual Russian-Ukrainian identity that follows Putin’s vision of “one nation.”

On the same day in Minsk, the protocol of Kozak-Yermak was signed at a meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) that creates preconditions for recognizing the subjectivity of the “DNR / LNR” and erodes the previous five-year state position on non-recognition of the Russian proxies. According to Alyona Getmanchuk, Director of the New Europe Center, the agreements, signed on March 11 in Minsk, are very similar to what Kozak tested in Moldova in 2003 on the Transnistrian settlement. Former representative of Ukraine in the TCG political subgroup Roman Bezsmertnyi points out that in the legal sense this is the recognition of the exclusive sides of the conflict - ORDLO, on the one hand, and Ukraine, on the other hand, with the automatic removal of Russia from the conflict. Therefore, if such a decision is approved, it finally erodes the status of the Russian Federation as an aggressor country, gives it a status of a mediator, and puts it on a par with France and Germany. So, in Minsk, a kind of co-creation of Kozak and Yermak was launched, where Kozak plays a leading role, and Yermak - a role of subcontractor. Application of the “formula KozYermak” with an advisory board, which includes Russian proxies, is simply an upgrade of Kozak’s Moldovan experience. The goal is obvious - “make a Transnistria in Ukraine” with further “Bosnianization” if the Rubicon is crossed by Zelensky at the next N4 meeting or in the Minsk process.



5. If the Munich document is aimed primarily at an international audience, the “Sivokho platform”, presented on March 12, was in fact organizationally aimed at the Ukrainian domestic audience. The purpose of its creation is not only assistance to Russia’s propaganda, and political and diplomatic transformation of the fact of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine into a “civil war in Ukraine” in order to fix the Russian version of events of 2014 in the public consciousness of Ukrainians. The Kremlin’s legend of the events in Ukraine is well known: “the Maidan uprising in Kyiv — a *coup d’etat* with a shift of legitimate power — disagreement of the “people of Donbas” with the insurgents — the proclamation of people’s republics — a military operation of Kyiv authorities against the region — a protracted civil conflict.”

6. In March 2020, Head of the Prosecutor General’s Office was replaced by a person who was not independent but loyal to the Office of the President. That became an indicator of the tendency of the state leadership to fabricate politically motivated cases. The investigation of the “Biden case”, which both Trump and the Kremlin wanted, was resumed in May 2020 due to the impetus of the “Derkach records”, whose activities have been focused on this case for the last six months. Since 2019, it has been promoting cases in the public domain, which, in its opinion, testify to the facts of corruption of the top leadership of Ukraine and the United States. The cases concern money transfers of oligarch V. Pinchuk in the amount of USD 29 million in favor of the Clinton Foundation and the scandal around the Burisma Holdings as a corruption deal of the previous leadership of the United States (Joe Biden) and Ukraine (Petro Poroshenko).

The template of Russian propaganda provides also hysteria around Soros and “soro-siata”, the greedy IMF, which wants the Ukrainian land, and the supervisory boards of state-owned companies, which are run by foreigners who want to “get their hands on” Ukrainian assets. The purpose of these campaigns is to undermine Ukraine’s relations with the United States, the EU and the IMF in order to restore relations with Russia on the basis of de facto capitulation under the guise of “Donbas peace” rhetoric and de facto consent to the occupation and illegal annexation of Crimea. An attempt to strike at the EU-Ukraine cooperation in the field of the gas sector reforms was made on May 28, 2020, when 47 deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine submitted to the Constitutional Court a request on the constitutionality of the law on the unbundling of Naftogaz and the separation of GTS into a separate company. Such a step is entirely in Russia’s interests - to destroy the main achievements of sectoral cooperation between Ukraine and the EU in the post-revolutionary period and to create conditions for the resumption of Naftogaz’s non-transparent business with Gazprom according to the patterns of the past.

3rd step: Chaos management through fast decisions, initiated actions and preventive measures towards other actors.

A vision of Serhii Markov, one of the apologists for Putin’s regime, is indicative: “I think that the situation with the coronavirus could lead to the collapse of the political regime in Ukraine, because it has obviously led the country to catastrophe.” “We need to be prepared to the time when the regime collapses at all, and then a short-time, for several days, struggle for power in Ukraine will begin. It is necessary to be ready for it...,” Markov considers.

If the catastrophe of the power, expected in Russia, does not happen in Ukraine, then Surkov’s “algorithm” of February 26, 2020 may be launched: “Coercion by force into fraternal relations is the only method that has historically proved to be effective in the Ukrainian direction. I don’t think any other will be invented.”

4th step: Putting chaos to order, re-engineering of space, gaining new reality - Ukraine in the status of the UkrSSR 2.0.

The success that Russia has achieved so far in carrying out a special operation to undermine the Ukrainian government is the created competition between two contours of external governance controlled by the Kremlin - the old Medvedchuk-Boyko contour and the newly formed Kozak-Yermak one, forced work of which is manifested in turbo regime of the authorities. The strategic line of influence, on which the Kremlin relies, is as follows: Kozak-Yermak-Zelenskyy, and then, after the collapse of the current ruling team, the old tested persons from the OPZZh will be pushed to the Pechersk Hills. They will be designed to ensure the creation of a new reality - the UkrSSR 2.0 and Pereyaslav Rada 2.0.

Now the reformatted public authorities are being saturated with agents of influence. The novelty is that some of the newly appointed officials have a good Western background – they have not only studied, but also worked in American and European companies and organizations. But either because of their further cooperation with “Russian partners”, or because of the inability to work in responsible government positions, they can fit into the algorithms launched by the intelligence services of the Russian Federation.

The general method of destructive actions today is as follows: chaos of management decisions is generated from the center, at the national level. The heads of regional administrations, appointed by President V. Zelenskyy, are mostly random people who are not able to respond to chaos in an adequate manner. Inactive incompetence of personnel turns into paralysis of the executive branch and practical uncontrollability of the country.

At the same time, Russia has intensified its messages to the West about the expediency of lifting sanctions, justifying this by the coronavirus pandemic, although the real reason is another - Russia enters into a severe economic crisis due to falling oil and gas prices, collapse of the Russian ruble, rapid depletion of the National Welfare Fund, and then the coronavirus pandemic. Russia hides the real state of affairs. Instead, the Kremlin is betting on diverting the international attention to the pandemic and pushing the Ukrainian leadership to negotiate on Russian terms with its proxies in Donetsk and Luhansk. Russia sees a pause in Ukrainian-American contacts, as the White House is increasingly burdened both in overcoming the coronavirus pandemic and in domestic problems in the context of the coming presidential elections.

Both Ukrainians and Ukraine's foreign partners are aware of the fact that the top state leadership does not react to the intensification of Russian shelling of Ukrainian positions and the death of Ukrainian soldiers. V. Zelenskyy also avoids raising the issue of the de-occupation of the Crimean peninsula and indirectly plays along the Russian diplomacy in its offstage, informal informing of Western colleagues about the Ukrainian President's readiness to recognize the de facto Russian status of Crimea. Zelenskyy also does not respond to ongoing repressions against Crimean Tatars in occupied Crimea.

The top art of hybrid aggression is to activate the pathology in the state body of the enemy, acting from within through the created contours of external governance and forcing it to act on the four-step algorithm of the aggressor at an appropriate moment. In effect, the Ukrainian inexperienced and weak government plays the role of generators of chaos, while its authors and directors are in the Kremlin offices and are completing, like in 2014, preparations for a new stage of aggression against Ukraine. Suddenly, the authorities in Ukraine began to ignore the well-known facts that the two army corps in ORDLO were under the command of Russian officers and generals. These corps are part of the 8th Army of the Southern Military District of the Russian Federation. In the occupied territory of Donbas, there is no governing body to which they are subordinated. And it is the Russian command from the District headquarters in Rostov that orders the shelling of the positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Given the current circumstances - the coronavirus pandemic and the oil and financial collapse in Russia, it is hardly appropriate to force any negotiations with the aggressor according to its algorithm. On the contrary, additional strict requirements should be set, in particular for the inclusion of the issue of Crimea into the agenda of the “Normandy format”. Despite the unfavorable circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic, however, the society and the state must use this to strengthen their positions and not lose them.

As it can be seen from the above mentioned, Russia’s war against Ukraine is generally progressing in accordance with the way, formed by the Russian theorists before it began. After receiving a rebuff in the East in 2014-2015, the aggressor is transforming the Ukrainian power from within so that it ceases to consider Russia as an enemy. The goal of the Russian Federation at the present stage is to consolidate the achieved intermediate results of this war, persuading the transformed Ukrainian power to surrender under the guise of peace, disguising the defeat of Ukraine as a “victory of common sense.”

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6. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The effectiveness of Russian direct and covert influences on the Ukrainian government is evidenced by V. Zelenskyy’s publication in The New York Times newspaper on May 20, 2020. Professor Igor Eisenberg gave an accurate assessment of this publication: “There is no mention of Crimea in it. None. The word Crimea is not in the article. Crimea is not on the list of challenges for Ukraine. In the article published two days after the anniversary of the deportation of the Crimean Tatar people. The article signed by the head of state, which territory is partly annexed, does not mention this annexed territory, or the Russian aggression, which resulted in this annexation, or the human rights violations by the occupiers in the annexed territory. The article makes no mention of Ukraine’s aspirations to join NATO and the EU. Nothing.” This case, as described above, testifies to the success of the false-target programming of the country’s leadership under the strategic vision and interests of Russia as an aggressor.

It can be stated that **the financing of Russian geopolitical revanchism and military aggression, including subversive activities through the agents within Ukraine and the EU, is carried out mainly through the export of energy resources, which provides the income to the Putin regime. In this regard, it can be concluded that, if the EU had the political will, it could block Russian expansionism and aggression by restricting energy imports from Russia.** Especially since the long period of low hydrocarbon prices and their surplus in the market contributes to this.

The lack of a comprehensive system of policies to counter the aggressor’s influence from within Ukraine through lobbying in the course of hybrid war and the lack of a system of state institutions capable of implementing it, threatens catastrophic consequences for the statehood.

In order to counteract the use of the aggressor state’s resources to strengthen economic and, consequently, political influences, systematic comprehensive actions by the state authorities and civil society, in general, are needed. These should be actions of an institutional, policy-and-law and socio-political nature.

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□ **Institutional:**

- Establishment of a body for coordinating the activities of special services in the system of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine.
- Reforming the Security Service of Ukraine in terms of reorienting economic security units from the combat against “*corruption and organized crime in the field of management and economy and other illegal actions*” to combat activities related to the risks of increasing external negative influences (primarily from the aggressor country) in the field of public administration and economy, as well as to neutralize any actions related to attempts to indirectly finance anti-Ukrainian and pro-Russian political and social activities.
- Creation of a special state agency for economic security and sanctions regimes with such an algorithm:
 - **data collection and analysis:** on the basis of data from the special services, expert research, public and journalistic investigations, to analyze risks and threats to economic and energy security of the country both in terms of macroeconomic stability and independence, and in terms of growth of the local or sectoral (as in cases of liquefied natural gas or diesel fuel) internal influences;
 - **preparation of draft government decisions:** to prepare, in accordance with the analysis, the necessary decisions of state institutions aimed at counteracting and minimizing risks and threats, including proposing the introduction of sanctions against both entities originating from the aggressor country and companies operating covertly in Ukraine and abroad, ensuring resource and energy independence, preventing the use of Ukrainian resources to strengthen the military potential of the aggressor country, etc. ;
 - **support of decisions and control:** to coordinate the activities of state institutions for the implementation of decisions;
 - **preventive measures:** to reduce the risks to national economic interests from the actions of the aggressor country, primarily through the application of sanctions and their synchronization with the sanctions regimes of partner countries, including the United States and the EU.
- Strengthening counterintelligence activities, intensification of intelligence services in the areas of neutralizing the covert agent activities of the aggressor state.

□ **Policy-and-law:**

- The practice of political appointments to senior positions in law enforcement agencies and special services (except for civilian ministers of defense and interior affairs) should be abandoned. They should be candidates with appropriate qualifications and work experience, preferably opponents to Russian hybrid aggression.
- At the legislative level (in the National Security Strategy and the Law of Ukraine “On National Security of Ukraine”), it is necessary to clearly define the actions of individuals and legal entities that may pose a threat to national security, as well as actions that can be assessed as collaboration with the aggressor, introduce (and further apply) criminal liability for such actions.
- It is necessary to comprehensively implement the relevant legal restrictions on the activities of the media, on the above issues, and the dissemination of information and cultural products that may have an impact in the interests of the aggressor.
- Further reform of law enforcement and anti-corruption bodies is needed in order to prevent corruption and the use of corruption levers, as well as to effectively counter the activities of the aggressor’s agents.
- Further harmonization of the legislative field of Ukraine on lobbying with the accepted practice in the EU should become a key task for counteracting subversive, illegitimate activities of lobbyists from the aggressor country. In particular, the adoption of a law on lobbying is urgently needed, which will regulate, inter alia, the interaction between civil servants, representatives of the legislative and the executive power, on the one hand, and non-governmental interests, on the other hand, in the process of developing and making public decisions, implementation of laws and regulations of the Government, President, Parliament and other public authorities. It is necessary to adopt legislation with the introduction of lobbying in the legal framework in order to narrow the field of quasi-legal actions of the agents of influence.

□ **Public:**

- Civil society organizations should develop and implement internal ethical rules and procedures to prevent their possible use by aggressor state’s agents in order to increase internal influence in Ukraine or destabilize the situation.
- On each of the fronts of hybrid aggression, there are relevant expert and public best practices to counter the aggressor.

□ **Economic direction:**

- Protection of vulnerable spheres of socio-economic life requires the development and implementation of separate or specialized investment regimes, adapted to each area, which is of strategic importance for the development and security of the country. This applies, in particular, to such areas as banking and financial systems, energy, research and development, media, agriculture, transport, state-owned companies and others. Moreover, some regions of the country may also need such special regimes. Such rules should clearly regulate the activities of participants and interaction between them, in particular, the government and state-owned companies, national capital, foreign investors, international financial and donor organizations, the public, etc.
- As long as the Russian aggression against Ukraine continues, nobody can speak about resuming economic cooperation with the aggressor country, especially with regard to the procurement of energy resources and, in particular, natural gas. It is necessary to legislate a moratorium on the import of natural gas from the state that is not a party to the Energy Community Treaty and is recognized by Ukraine as an aggressor or state occupant, for the period until the completion of national security and defense measures, as well as repulsion and deterrence of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation in Donetsk and Luhansk regions against Ukraine, restoration of control over the state border, carried out through the Joint Forces Operation (JFO). Also, this should be done until restoration of organizational and technological integrity of the oil and gas complex, damaged after seizure of production and pipeline infrastructure of Naftogaz of Ukraine and its subsidiaries in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, in the exclusive maritime economic zone of Ukraine in the Black Sea and in some Donetsk and Luhansk regions.
- The period of low prices for oil and oil products on the world market and excess supply create a unique opportunity to get rid of dependence on oil supplies from Russia, carried out through one of the pro-Russian groups, which provides a financial basis for subversive activities within Ukraine.

□ **Information direction:**

In the information direction, under the conditions of the war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, we consider it necessary to take such measures:

- To make it mandatory to register as a legal entity and the media all online media (multimedia platforms, Internet television, radio, newspapers, news agencies, etc.), at the legislative level;
- To adopt laws that require all media, not just broadcasters, to disclose funding sources and ownership structure, including the provision of reliable data on the final beneficiary. To prohibit media funding by the aggressor country.
- To prescribe clearly in Ukrainian legislation the rules that determine which elements of the work of the media pose a threat to national security.
- To adopt a law on collaboration, which would, among other things, clearly set out the rules governing the media in the Russian-Ukrainian war. To introduce legal restrictions on the cooperation of Ukrainian media with the media and information resources of the aggressor country.
- To develop a Humanitarian Strategy instead of the Information Security Doctrine, which should become the basis of state policy in combating Russian hybrid aggression in the humanitarian sphere in general and in the information sphere in particular.
- To continue blocking Russian sites and social networks. To prepare a regulation that contains clear criteria on the basis of which it will be possible to block a particular Internet resource.
- Given the shortcomings of the withdrawn bill No. 6688 “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Concerning Counteraction to Threats to National Security in the Information Sphere,” to develop a law providing for monitoring of international telecommunication channels and traffic filtering, introduction of temporary blocking of access to a certain information resource (service) in data and telecom networks. To take into account the national legislation and international obligations of Ukraine in the field of civil rights and freedoms.
- To extend the powers of the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting and give it the right to suspend or revoke licenses in case of media violations of Article 6 of the Law on Television and Radio Broadcasting, including calls for violent constitutional change, incitement

of hatred and enmity, television broadcasts containing the promotion or propaganda of the aggressor state’s bodies and their individual actions that justify or recognize the occupation of the territory of Ukraine as lawful.

- To intensify the work of media self-regulatory organizations (Commission on Journalistic Ethics, Independent Media Council, etc.), make it more public, communicate the decisions and recommendations of these organizations to a wide range of viewers, listeners and readers not only on their own sites but also in the most popular media (on TV, in the Internet media, social networks).
- To create a specialized independent body to conduct forensic examinations of media content. To involve experts from both governmental and non-governmental sectors in its work.
- To extend the powers of the National Commission for State Regulation of Communications and Informatization (NCSRCI) in terms of checking the activities of telecommunications operators. To empower the Security Service of Ukraine with the right to inspect the activities of the operator in case of reasonable suspicion of violation of the legislation under which sanctions were imposed against the subjects of the aggressor country.
- To create a legal framework for the restoration and effective operation of the military media in the face of Russian aggression.
- To improve the Serpanok comprehensive system of information counteraction and ensure its most effective work for the complete blocking of analog and digital television and radio broadcasted from Russian territory and from the occupied by Russia territory of Ukraine. To create a legal basis for the application of these broadcasting systems.
- To increase the number of transmitter towers in the areas near the demarcation line and occupied Crimea to cover not only the territory of Ukraine but also the border areas of Russia with the Ukrainian signal. To improve signal quality and increase the range of towers (in particular, on Karachun).
- To provide broadcasting of at least 20 Ukrainian TV channels in the territory where the enemy signals (Russian + “DPR / LPR”) is jammed.
- To remove the coding of the TV signal of Ukrainian channels for the regions bordering the Russian Federation, as their coding does not lead to the purchase of decoders, but stimulates the population to watch Russian TV channels.

- To obtain accurate data on the area covered by the Ukrainian signal to ensure effective cooperation of the RRT concern, in particular, its Donetsk branch, with the Ukrainian State Centre of Radio Frequencies (UCRF). For UCRF, to complete work on measurements of the coverage area by the Ukrainian signal, to put the obtained results on the map.
 - Given the extremely low interest of Ukrainian citizens to the issues of media literacy, “information hygiene” and the fight against fakes, to ensure creation and broadcasting on TV and social networks of small social advertising promos understandable to a wide range of users.
 - To expand the work started by the Security Service of Ukraine in schools to teach children the basic rules of media literacy and information security. To involve volunteers and experts from media organizations in this work. To develop a curriculum and implement a compulsory course in schools (or make it part of other subjects, such as computer science or life safety basic rules).
- **Religious direction:**

In the religious domain, which has become a springboard for the aggressor’s penetration into the spiritual life of society in order to transform it under the Russian formula of “Orthodox unity”, it is necessary to take the following measures to counteract the destructive influences of Russia and the ROC:

- To promote the legal protection of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine from attacks by the ROC and its affiliated UOC-MP, including litigation for slander and insulting remarks about Tomos, as well as for fake news programs.
- To initiate and promote a broad information and educational campaign that would tell about the history of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, autocephaly.
- In connection with the transition of the UOC-MP to the position of orthodox clericalism, with anti-state position, ignoring quarantine measures, violation of the use of national and cultural monuments, terminate the lease agreement for the use of Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra and Pochaiv Lavra, restore their status solely as national, historical and cultural reserves.
- To recommend the Orthodox Church of Ukraine to support inter-church cooperation with the UGCC and inter-confessional cooperation with the Muftiate of the Crimean Tatar people.

- For the Security Service of Ukraine, to study issues and take measures against illegal financial transactions between the ROC and the UOC-MP, as well as church bribery and corruption by the UOC-MP of representatives of state authorities and local self-government.

In general, it can be argued that only the internal mobilization of Ukrainian society, raising public awareness, critical perception of information and thinking, together with the creation of an effective system of government and control can neutralize hostile influences, defeat the aggressor in a hybrid war and strengthen Ukraine’s sovereignty.

The authoritative non-partisan Initiative Group “December 1” in its address “Time to make responsible decisions” on May 7, 2020 clearly stated: “...**those who have repeatedly demonstrated their involvement in the Kremlin’s subversive plans or put their selfish interests above the interests of the state should be resolutely ousted. In particular, the President of Ukraine should realize that his probable choice in favor of the anti-Maidan “personnel reserve”, which seeks revenge, will not save him or the country.**”

The words of Winston Churchill - “victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival”, should become a guide for both the state and society.

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Russian Octopus in Action. Case “Ukraine”

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The information and conclusions presented in this publication represent the exercise of freedom of speech by the authors (guaranteed by Article 34 of the Constitution of Ukraine and Article 10 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms), which is one of the basic foundations of a democratic society, one of the fundamental preconditions of its development. This publication does not contain information presented in a brutal, derogatory or obscene manner.

The conclusions and statements made in this publication constitute the evaluative judgments of its authors. The judgments of the authors of the publication, although evaluative, are based, on the one hand, on previously published information that the authors of this publication consider true and reliable, and, on the other hand, on a systematic analysis of relevant information and activities of legal entities and individuals mentioned in this publication, as well as public organizations. Herewith, according to the authors of the publication, they had a sufficient basis for the conclusions and statements.

This publication is made for a legitimate purpose and pursues a legitimate aim, as it is not intended to discredit the activities of legal and natural persons mentioned in this publication, as well as public organizations, but is aimed at assisting the state authorities of Ukraine, its citizens, governmental and non-governmental institutions ensuring the national security of Ukraine in the conditions of aggression against it, including by counteracting - by available legal means and from the standpoint of civil society - agents of influence of the aggressor.



**The opinions and assessments expressed in the publication reflect
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