



## Cross-cultural communication as a tool for forming a positive image of Ukraine in the world

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**Abstract.** Modern geopolitical challenges and the need for Ukraine's active integration into the global information space have determined the importance of cross-cultural communication in shaping a positive national image. The purpose of the study was to clarify the role of cross-cultural communication in forming a positive image of Ukraine in the international arena and to identify effective mechanisms for its application. It was demonstrated that cross-cultural communication enabled Ukraine to establish mutual understanding with different nations, thereby fostering trust, support, and solidarity in the global arena. It was emphasised that the issue of forming a positive image of Ukraine worldwide is strategically significant in the context of its integration into the European and global community. The study showed that through language, art, science, education, diplomacy, and other forms of communication, Ukraine can convey its values, history, traditions, and contemporary achievements to the international community, as well as overcome stereotypes and build trust. Furthermore, cross-cultural interaction allowed the Ukrainian people to demonstrate their identity, resilience, and spiritual strength, which was particularly important in the context of the struggle for independence and international subjectivity. It was established that cross-cultural communication was not only a means of cultural exchange but also a powerful instrument of strategic communication that enabled Ukraine to shape a positive image, strengthen international ties, and consolidate its position on the global stage. The study substantiated that the development of cross-cultural competence contributed to improving the quality of foreign policy, diplomatic, media, and cultural interaction. Through intercultural dialogue and the promotion

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of Ukrainian identity, art, language, and values, the state can form an attractive, open, and progressive image and positively influence international partnership, tourism, investment attractiveness, and cultural diplomacy. These elements constituted key components of Ukraine's sustainable development strategy in the global environment. The results of the study may be applied in further theoretical research on cultural diplomacy

**Keywords:** state image; public diplomacy; media; globalisation; international communication

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## Introduction

The relevance of studying cross-cultural communication as a tool for forming a positive image of Ukraine in the world is determined by contemporary geopolitical challenges and the need for the country's active integration into the global information space. In the context of war, disinformation campaigns, and the growing role of "soft power", effective communication with the international community, taking into account the cultural characteristics of other countries, is of particular importance. Cross-cultural communication enables Ukraine to establish mutual understanding with different nations, thereby building trust, support, and solidarity on the global stage. Furthermore, the development of cross-cultural competence contributes to improving the quality of foreign policy, diplomatic, media, and cultural interaction. Through intercultural dialogue and the promotion of Ukrainian identity, art, language, and values, the state can form an attractive, open, and progressive image, which in turn positively influences international partnership, investment attractiveness, and cultural diplomacy and constitutes a key component of Ukraine's sustainable development strategy in the global environment.

The influence of cross-cultural communication on the formation of a state's image has been widely examined by representatives of various academic schools worldwide. In particular, O. Pryshlyak (2019) investigated the interaction between public diplomacy and national branding, emphasised the need for continuous assessment and adaptive strategies to promote national interests and identity on the global stage, and proposed practical recommendations for public diplomacy

practitioners and policy-makers. The author also highlighted the strategic importance of public diplomacy in advancing national interests and strengthening "soft power". One of the most influential theorists of cultural diplomacy, political analyst J. Nye (2023), substantiated the formation of a state's image through cultural influence, public diplomacy, and intercultural interaction. Professors of global communication and specialists in public diplomacy, state image, and strategic communication in a cross-cultural context, N. Snow & N. Cull (2020), reinterpreted public diplomacy in the 2020s and noted that it is inevitably linked to power and that greater investment should be directed towards "soft power" rather than "hard power", such as costly weapons systems. They emphasised that J. Nye's (2024) policy proposal called on the world's wealthiest country to invest in improved domestic education and a more effective international influence infrastructure, including the development of a professional profile of the public diplomat. A. Walle (2022b) proposed considering entrepreneurship from a "culturally competent" perspective. Presenting these views within a concise and limited volume provides an effective means of disseminating these important theoretical approaches.

A significant contribution to the study of the impact of cross-cultural communication on a state's image in the global information space has also been made by Ukrainian scholars from various fields, including philosophy, cultural studies, social communications, international relations, and economics. In particular, O. Savenko (2022) identified common and distinctive features of the

concepts of a country's "image" and "brand" based on socio-cultural markers of their positioning and emphasised that an important factor in shaping Ukraine's image and brand is the recognition of cultural policy as an integral component of foreign policy. O. Morhulets *et al.* (2023) substantiated the importance of cross-cultural communication in ensuring high-quality services and meeting the needs of culturally diverse tourist groups, identified problems related to language barriers, cultural differences, stereotypes, and insufficient staff training, and proposed ways to improve cross-cultural communication in tourism. Z. Atamanchuk (2022) defined the content of cultural elements, focused on models of world culture, and substantiated the influence of cross-cultural communication on the dissemination of innovations. D. Rybak (2020) described cultural diplomacy as an element of state policy and examined the phenomenon of the "Ukraine" brand in international politics. Professor of social communications O. Derevyanko (2025) developed an original model of reputation management and investigated the role of intercultural communication in shaping the image of the state.

However, a review of recent publications has revealed a lack of research on the impact of cross-cultural communication on Ukraine's image during the war. The existing literature focuses primarily on the political, military, and informational dimensions of the conflict, while the role of intercultural exchange, cultural diplomacy, and public communication in strengthening international support is often overlooked. This gap represents a significant challenge, as cross-cultural communication constitutes a powerful instrument for shaping a positive image of Ukraine in the perception of the international community. The absence of sufficient research in this field complicates the development of effective cultural diplomacy strategies, which may, in turn, influence the level of solidarity and support provided by other countries.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to substantiate the role of cross-cultural communication as an effective tool for shaping a positive

image of Ukraine within the global communication space.

## Materials and Methods

The source base of the study consisted of electronic databases and mass media materials. The research was conducted in 2025. The methodological framework was based on a comprehensive analysis of the impact of cross-cultural communication on the formation of a state's image. This field of inquiry is interdisciplinary in nature and incorporates elements of philosophy, sociology, political science, cultural studies, communication studies, and international relations. To ensure a holistic examination of this phenomenon, a range of methods was employed, enabling the identification of how cross-cultural interaction influences the perception of a state in the global environment.

An effective tool for investigating the impact of cross-cultural communication on the formation of a state's image was content analysis. This method allowed for the systematic examination of textual and visual materials, media content, social networks, and other information sources that reflect the image of a particular country. Through content analysis, it was possible to identify which cultural codes, stereotypes, symbols, and narratives predominated in messages addressed to foreign audiences. This method was of particular value in the study of cross-cultural interaction, where linguistic nuances, cultural characteristics, emotional colouring, and contextual factors play a significant role.

The case study method enabled an in-depth analysis of real situations and events in which intercultural interaction became a key factor in shaping or transforming the perception of a particular country. The application of case studies in this field made it possible to trace not only the existence of communicative influence, but also the mechanisms through which this influence is realised. This approach allowed for the examination of contextual conditions, the interests of the actors involved, channels of message

transmission, and audience responses, all of which constitute essential components of cross-cultural interaction. In addition, the comparison of several cases facilitated the identification of typical behavioural patterns and communication strategies that prove effective or, conversely, ineffective in an intercultural environment.

Discourse analysis made it possible to examine not only the content of statements, but also the contexts in which they emerge, revealing implicit meanings, ideological positions, and cross-cultural differences. In relation to state image, discourse analysis contributed to understanding how a country is represented in the media, official diplomacy, and popular culture, and how these representations are interpreted by other cultures. Within the study of cross-cultural communication, discourse analysis functioned as a tool for gaining deeper insight into the processes through which a state's image is constructed in the perception of the international community. It enabled not only the description of linguistic features of state representation, but also the identification of strategic approaches to shaping a positive image through the adaptation of communication practices in accordance with the cultural characteristics of target audiences.

The method of comparative analysis constituted one of the key tools in examining the impact of cross-cultural communication on the formation of a state's image, as it allowed for the investigation of how different countries implement communication strategies in intercultural contexts and with what outcomes. By comparing the experiences of several states, effective models for constructing a positive international image were identified, particularly through cultural diplomacy, public communication, and international information campaigns.

## Results and Discussion

Cross-cultural communication plays a key role in shaping a positive image of a state in the international arena, particularly in the context of globalisation and the growing interdependence

of countries. It encompasses the processes of exchanging information, ideas, values, and cultural characteristics among representatives of different nations, thereby promoting understanding, mutual respect, and cooperation. One of the most influential scholars in the field of cross-cultural communication is the Dutch researcher G. Hofstede (2001), whose model of cultural dimensions is widely used to analyse cultural differences and their impact on international communication, including the formation of national images. His factor analysis of cultural dimensions was based on extensive research into cultural preferences and comparisons of values, behaviour, institutions, and organisations across different countries. The model was developed to assist organisations in improving communication and cooperation among people from diverse cultural backgrounds and provides a useful framework for understanding how cultural differences influence business relations. G. Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions continues to be actively applied in contemporary research. In particular, M. Beño (2021) examined the influence of cultural dimensions on remote work in Europe and argued that the promotion of electronic forms of work can enhance interaction among people from different cultures who, depending on their cultural background, feel, think, and act differently. When such differences are taken into account, creativity contributes to more effective problem-solving. A. Walle (2022a) also noted that G. Hofstede's (2001) model focuses on various social and cultural characteristics that can be analysed when identifying significant differences among nations and in understanding how people tend to respond to social situations.

According to E. Rogers *et al.* (2002), the founder of intercultural communication as an academic field was E. Hall, the author of theories on the contextual nature of communication, which are of great importance for shaping the image of states through the media, diplomacy, and public communication. Particularly innovative in E. Hall's (1976) work was his focus, as observed by W. Hansen (1990), not on the study of a

single culture or on cross-cultural comparison – as was typical in anthropology in the 1950s – but on interaction between representatives of different cultures. E. Hall defined cross-cultural communication as a specific sphere of human relations in which culture and communication are intertwined and emphasised that communication with representatives of other cultures should be systematically taught.

Cross-cultural communication requires systematic conceptual understanding within the expert community. The term cross-cultural communication derives from the combination of the words cross-culture and communication and integrates the meanings of these two concepts: from the English cross – to cross or pass – and the Latin “*cultura, ae f*” – transformation, education, and development. M. Lashkina *et al.* (2023) note that the term cross-cultural communication has a multifaceted interpretation across different scientific schools. Within communication theory, some scholars consider intercultural and cross-cultural communication to be identical concepts, whereas others distinguish between them. In particular, A. Solodka (2016) concluded that “at the level of communication aimed at achieving common meaning, correspondence of language codes, coordination of positions, and establishment of understanding between participants”, the concepts of cross-cultural and intercultural communication are identical. F. Batsevych (2007), in a dictionary of terms of intercultural communication, differentiates between the concepts of cross-cultural and intercultural communication. According to G. Trager & E. Hall (1954), cross-cultural communication is defined as the ideal goal towards which a person should strive in order to adapt to the surrounding world as effectively as possible. L. Samovar *et al.* (2009) define cross-cultural communication as communication between people who have different cultural perceptions of symbolic systems. G. Hofstede *et al.* (2010) conceptualise cross-cultural communication as a process of information exchange between individuals

from different cultures that takes into account cultural differences in meanings, behaviour, and values. O. Taylor (1990) describes cross-cultural communication as a set of skills and knowledge that enable people to communicate effectively and work in a multicultural environment. L. Samovar *et al.* (2009) also define cross-cultural communication as an interactive process in which participants from different cultures attempt to exchange meanings while considering both cultural differences and common features. In particular, the authors note that non-verbal symbols that are positively evaluated and interpreted in one culture may receive a negative interpretation in another. Cross-cultural communication is further conceptualised as a process through which individuals gradually expand their capacity to understand and respect other cultures. It involves interaction between two cultural subjects (actors) or between an individual and a group (or group and group), resulting in the adaptation of value orientations and behavioural norms, their mutual influence, absorption, displacement, or replacement. R. Singh (2002) analysed the history, nature, and problems underlying conflict in the context of “culture wars”. N. Samoilenko (2014) interprets cross-cultural communication as a specific type of culture characterised by interaction between ethnocultures, ethnocultural competence of the individual, tolerance, and efforts to achieve agreement in all spheres of international communication. In a general sense, scholars define cross-cultural communication as interaction at the “intersection” of cultures, as well as at the intersection of worldviews, perspectives, age groups, and social statuses – that is, communication and interaction among representatives of different cultures. Cross-cultural communication is gaining increasing importance, particularly in the context of active interaction with international partners. The growth in the number of refugees during wartime stimulates the development of cross-cultural dialogue and requires high levels of tolerance, cultural awareness, and language

competence. In response to these challenges, an increasing number of educational institutions are incorporating cross-cultural competence into their curricula. N. Borysko (2018) interprets cross-cultural communication as a process of interaction within a multicultural space.

In the context of this study, cross-cultural communication is understood as a process of information exchange between representatives of different cultures which, within conditions of cultural diversity, involves an understanding of cultural norms and values as well as the ability to adapt one's own behaviour to the specific context. This is particularly important in a globalised world, where interaction among representatives of different cultures has become an integral part of everyday life and professional activity. Effective cross-cultural communication presupposes the development of such skills as active listening, empathy, tolerance, and the ability to resolve conflicts arising from cultural differences. Individuals who possess these skills are better able to understand their interlocutors, avoid misunderstandings, and build relationships based on trust. These competencies are especially valuable in

international business, education, diplomacy, and many other fields. In addition to practical skills, an essential component of cross-cultural communication is cultural awareness – the ability to recognise and appreciate the characteristics of other cultures without prejudice. This contributes to reducing the risk of cultural barriers and supports the creation of an inclusive environment in which individuals can freely express themselves. Cross-cultural communication thus represents a key condition for effective interaction in a multicultural world.

The main elements of cross-cultural communication are language, non-verbal signs, values, behavioural norms, and cultural context (Table 1). Language may be both verbal and non-verbal, and gestures, facial expressions, and intonation play an important role in conveying meaning. Values and norms determine what is considered acceptable or unacceptable within a particular culture. Cultural context influences how directly or indirectly people express their thoughts. Successful cross-cultural communication requires attention to these elements and a willingness to adapt to the characteristics of another culture.

**Table 1.** Basic elements of cross-cultural communication

Element	Description
Language	Verbal communication, including vocabulary, grammar, accents
Nonverbal communication	Gestures, facial expressions, body language, eye contact, distance in communication
Values and beliefs	What is important for culture: honesty, respect, hierarchy, individualism
Social norms	Accepted rules of conduct in society
Communication context	High-context (indirect communication) or low-context (direct)
Time perception	Polychronic (flexible attitude to time) or monochronic (accuracy is important)
Role structure	Attitudes towards power, status, gender roles
Stereotypes and prejudices	Perceptions of other cultures that may influence perceptions
Etiquette and customs	Rules of politeness, greetings, gift giving, etc.
Cultural sensitivity	Awareness of differences and respect for other cultures

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the works of N. Snow & N. Cull (2020), O. Patryak (2021), Z. Atamanchuk (2022), O. Derevyanko (2025)

Cultural differences encompass various aspects of human life and vary according to geographical location, historical conditions, religion, and social traditions. One of the most evident

forms of cultural difference is linguistic, as language not only serves as a means of communication but also shapes thinking, behaviour, and even ways of perceiving the world. In some cultures,

politeness and respect in language play a central role, whereas in others a more direct expression of ideas is considered acceptable. Another important dimension of cultural difference concerns value orientations, including perceptions of good and evil, notions of what is acceptable or unacceptable, the role of the family, the meaning of work, and attitudes towards authority. For example, in Japan and China, collective interests are often prioritised over individual ones, whereas in Western individualistic societies greater emphasis is placed on personal freedom and self-realisation. These differences influence styles of communication, management, business practices, and child-rearing. Each culture also possesses distinctive ways of expressing respect, hospitality, and norms related to dress and food. Cultural differences may become a source of misunderstanding in intercultural communication; therefore, it is essential to recognise and respect them.

In an international context, cross-cultural communication constitutes a key aspect of interaction among representatives of different

nationalities, cultures, and mentalities, as it involves the exchange of information, ideas, and values between people with diverse cultural backgrounds. K. Kryvobok *et al.* (2024) note that readiness for cross-cultural interaction includes the ability to understand the culturally conditioned context of communication and to respond appropriately to it. Cross-cultural communication helps to prevent misunderstandings associated with differences in verbal and non-verbal codes, communication styles, perceptions of time, authority, and etiquette. Individuals who possess cross-cultural competence are able to adapt their messages to the characteristics of other cultures and demonstrate respect for diversity, thereby promoting effective cooperation. However, cross-cultural communication is accompanied by certain challenges, including language barriers, stereotypes, culture shock, and prejudice, which complicate mutual understanding. For this reason, it is particularly important to develop skills of active listening, empathy, tolerance, and cultural awareness (Table 2).

**Table 2.** *Challenges of cross-cultural communication*

Challenge	Description	Example
Language barrier	Misunderstanding the language or using words incorrectly can lead to confusion	A person uses a word that has a different meaning in another culture
Nonverbal disagreements	Gestures, facial expressions, and distance can be interpreted differently	Eye contact is a sign of confidence in one culture, but disrespect in another
Different ideas about time	Perceptions of punctuality, deadlines, and pace of communication vary	Europeans value punctuality, but in Latin America delays are possible
Cultural stereotypes	Biases and generalisations can interfere with objective perception	To believe that all Asians are introverts, or all Americans are straightforward
Hierarchy and authority	Different attitudes towards leadership and subordination across cultures	In Japan, respect for elders is expected, in the US, more equality in communication
Negotiation method	Negotiation styles vary: direct vs. indirect, hard vs. soft	The Germans are negotiating directly, while the Japanese are cautious, avoiding conflict
Contextuality of communication	High context (lots of "between the lines") vs. low context (clarity)	In China, communication is through hints, in the US it is open and direct
Religious and ethical differences	Different moral norms and prohibitions can cause misunderstandings	Touching a child's head is taboo in Thailand, but in Europe it is a sign of tenderness
Using humor	What is funny in one culture may be offensive in another	Sarcasm is considered normal in the US, but can be considered rude in Japan
Fear of mistakes or resentment	People may avoid open communication for fear of offending another culture	An employee is afraid to speak to a colleague from a different culture for fear of offending them

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the works of E. Hall (1976), N. Borysko (2018), M. Beño (2021)

Communication errors may lead to misunderstandings, stereotypes, and even international conflicts; therefore, cultural sensitivity in diplomacy, business, the media, and education is of critical importance. L. Prudyus (2016) noted that scholars identify three main causes of communication breakdowns in intercultural relations: the problem of perception (each individual interprets reality in their own way); the problem of stereotypes (the formation of generalised images and evaluations of people and phenomena based on limited or random observations); and the problem of ethnocentrism (a sense of superiority associated with belonging to a particular national culture).

Cross-cultural communication significantly influences how one state perceives another. An expert in public diplomacy and cultural policy, Y. Watanabe (2016), substantiated that culture and communication shape international perceptions of states and analysed a fundamental transformation in Japan's public diplomacy. State institutions must carefully consider the messages they transmit to external audiences, as effective cross-cultural communication can serve as a powerful instrument for shaping a positive national image. For example, the promotion of national culture, art, cuisine, language, and traditions through festivals, international exhibitions, cultural centres, and the media creates a favourable impression of a country, facilitates intercultural dialogue, and contributes to deeper mutual understanding.

The Dutch scholar in international relations, P. van Ham (2002), examined the issue of cross-cultural diplomacy and demonstrated the intersection of the two domains of public relations and international relations theory – two epistemic communities that have traditionally had limited interaction, despite their shared interest in globalisation, identity, and the changing nature of power in international politics. He also provided numerous concrete examples of place branding as a contemporary phenomenon. In the context of globalisation and intensive information exchange, a country's image largely depends on effective

cross-cultural communication, which enhances its attractiveness in the international arena and strengthens diplomatic relations. Cross-cultural communication also serves as an indicator of cultural development within society: on the one hand, it reflects the ability to perceive foreign cultural elements and generate new forms on this basis; on the other, it demonstrates the capacity to transmit one's own values to other cultures.

The image of a state and cross-cultural communication are therefore closely interconnected concepts. O. Khortiuk (2010) defines image, in a broad sense, as “a purposefully constructed representation that highlights specific value characteristics and is designed to exert emotional and psychological influence for the purposes of popularisation and promotion”. Effective interaction with other cultures contributes to the creation of a favourable international image of a country, while a positive image, in turn, facilitates communication and cooperation. State policy should give due consideration to the development of cross-cultural dialogue as an instrument of cultural diplomacy, since cross-cultural communication is a significant factor in shaping a positive image of the state in the international arena. It enables effective information exchange among representatives of different cultures, helps to avoid misunderstandings, and supports the establishment of trust-based relationships. In this context, communication becomes a form of “soft power” through which a country can demonstrate its values, traditions, and potential. Cross-cultural communication in the formation of a positive state image performs several important functions (Table 3).

For Ukraine, which is actively shaping its international positioning, effective cross-cultural communication serves not only as a diplomatic instrument but also as a means of demonstrating its national identity, cultural richness, and commitment to peace and development. In the context of contemporary geopolitical challenges, the positive image of Ukraine in the world has acquired particular significance. It is precisely through cross-cultural communication that

Ukraine can convey accurate information about itself to the international community, challenge stereotypes, and strengthen trust in its intentions and actions. The successful application of this instrument includes participation in international cultural projects, educational exchanges, digital diplomacy initiatives, and the active presence of Ukrainian artists, scientists, and opinion leaders

on the global stage. Cross-cultural communication is increasingly becoming an integral component of the state's external communication strategy and a key factor influencing its reputation in global society. In order to shape a positive image of the state at the international level, it is necessary to employ diverse mechanisms of cross-cultural communication (Table 4).

**Table 3.** Functions of cross-cultural communication in forming a positive image of the state

Function	Content	Implementation example
Informational	Ensuring the dissemination of reliable information about the country, its culture, achievements, and politics	Official websites, social media pages, media publications
Culturally representative	Introducing other peoples to the cultural values and traditions of the state	Participation in international festivals, exhibitions, cultural days
Educational	Spreading knowledge about the country through academic exchanges, educational programs, and scientific cooperation	Scholarships for foreigners, joint university programs
Image	Formation of a positive image of the state in the world community	Country branding, tourism campaigns, public diplomacy
Economical	Promoting the attractiveness of the state for investors, partners and consumers	Presentations at economic forums, participation in business exhibitions
Political	Strengthening foreign policy authority and partnerships	Speeches by leaders at international forums, diplomatic visits
Social	Promoting interpersonal dialogue and mutual understanding between peoples	Youth exchanges, volunteer programs, international forums
Preventive	Preventing intercultural conflicts and reducing stereotypes	Cross-cultural trainings, anti-xenophobic campaigns

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the works of E. Hall (1976), L. Prudyus (2016), D. Rybak (2020), J. Nye (2023), V. Makar (2024)

**Table 4.** Mechanisms of cross-cultural communication in the formation of a positive image of the state

Mechanism	Description	Implementation examples
Diplomacy (cultural, public, digital)	Using diplomatic channels to promote culture, values	Cultural representations, ambassadorial speeches, online platforms
Educational exchanges and academic programmes	Promoting international education and exchanges of students and teachers	Erasmus+, fulbright programs, scholarships for foreign students
International cultural events	Organisation or participation in festivals, exhibitions, fairs	Film festivals, art exhibitions, book fairs
Tourism as a means of cultural exchange	Popularisation of the country through tourist routes and historical and cultural sites	Visa programs, national tourism brands, guides in foreign languages
Mass media and social networks	Creating and distributing positive content about the state	State social media accounts, YouTube campaigns, documentaries
Cooperation with the diaspora	Using the potential of national communities abroad	Cultural days, forums, cooperation with Ukrainian communities abroad

Table 4. Continued

Mechanism	Description	Implementation examples
International partnership in arts and culture	Joint projects with artists from other countries	Film co-productions, music collaborations, artistic residencies
Nation branding	Strategic image formation through symbolism, narratives, campaigns	Slogans like "Ukraine now", logos, promo videos
Sports diplomacy	Popularisation through international sporting events	Olympic games, world championships, support for national teams
Volunteer and humanitarian initiatives	Participation in international aid as a manifestation of solidarity	Assistance to affected countries, medical missions, participation in peacekeeping projects

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the works of O. Taylor (1990), R. Singh (2002), A. Solodka (2016), N. Snow & N. Cull (2020), O. Savenko (2022)

One of the key aspects of cross-cultural communication is cultural sensitivity – the ability to take into account the specific features of language, customs, behavioural norms, and communicative styles of other peoples. Possession of such knowledge enables state institutions, diplomats, the media, and cultural mediators to formulate positive messages that resonate with target audiences. This approach contributes to the creation of a positive image of the state as open, tolerant, and attractive for cooperation. Cross-cultural communication not only improves international relations but also strengthens the international authority and reputation of the state. An especially important aspect is the use of cross-cultural dialogue as a platform for presenting national identity. The analytical report by O. Rozumna (2016) substantiates two key tasks of cultural diplomacy. Externally, it serves to ensure the state's image and the effectiveness of its international policy; internally, it contributes to changing the paradigm of culture and reforming cultural policy, on which the content and quality of cultural products depend. Through participation in international cultural projects, exhibitions, festivals, and student and academic exchanges, a country can influence global perceptions of itself. Academic exchanges, scholarship programmes, and foreign language learning create an environment for tolerant and conscious communication. Foreign students who study in another country often become its informal ambassadors

upon returning home, thereby shaping a positive reputation at the global level. The involvement of education in intercultural communication promotes mutual recognition of differences, deeper understanding of both one's own culture and foreign cultural environments, and awareness of the importance of cultural integration.

Education in the field of cross-cultural communication represents a powerful instrument of "soft power" that helps to form a positive, modern, and attractive image of Ukraine in the world. Learning the languages, cultural characteristics, and etiquette of other nations enables Ukrainians to establish intercultural ties effectively, avoid misunderstandings, and present the country as an open, tolerant, and integrated state in the global context. Such interaction contributes to strengthening trust in Ukraine as a partner in diplomatic, educational, and economic relations. Educational programmes aimed at developing cross-cultural competence, both within Ukrainian educational institutions and through international academic exchanges, play a significant role in this process. Ukrainian students and professionals who participate in such programmes become unofficial "cultural ambassadors" of their country, demonstrating to the world a high level of education, openness to dialogue, and a commitment to mutual understanding. At the same time, foreign students studying in Ukraine disseminate knowledge about Ukrainian culture in their home countries. The development of cross-cultural

education also contributes to improved representation of Ukraine in international organisations, cultural projects, and global media.

The formation of a generation of Ukrainians capable of engaging in effective dialogue with representatives of different nations strengthens the position of the state in the international community. The ability to communicate successfully with people from other cultures is an important factor in the development of diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties. Ukrainian specialists who possess knowledge of cultural specificities can promote better understanding of the country abroad by demonstrating its openness, tolerance, and high level of professionalism. The integration of cross-cultural competence into the education system makes it possible to prepare younger generations for effective participation in international projects, exchanges, and cooperation. Schools and universities can implement programmes that foster cross-cultural thinking, respect for diversity, and skills of intercultural dialogue, thereby contributing to the development of a sense of global responsibility among Ukrainian youth and increasing the attractiveness of Ukraine as a country actively integrating into the world community. Training in cross-cultural competence is also valuable for civil servants, diplomats, and professionals in tourism, culture, education, and business. Enhancing their intercultural literacy enables them to avoid misunderstandings, build partnerships based on mutual respect, and promote a positive image of Ukraine as a modern, dynamic, and democratic state in the perception of the international community. Investments in education and training in cross-cultural competence are therefore strategically important for Ukraine, as they not only increase the competitiveness of Ukrainian citizens in the global labour market but also shape a favourable image of the country as open, intellectually developed, and culturally rich, ready for constructive international dialogue.

In shaping a positive image of Ukraine in the international arena, cross-cultural communication also plays a crucial role in the business

sector, which functions not only as a source of economic profit but also as an important instrument of public diplomacy that strengthens Ukraine's international subjectivity. According to O. Patryak (2021), in order to understand one's role in the global market and to build a business strategy in accordance with market realities, it is essential to recognise the position of national business culture among the business cultures of the world. Effective interaction between Ukrainian entrepreneurs and international partners demonstrates openness, professionalism, and the capacity to operate in a global environment. As a result, Ukraine is perceived as a reliable partner, ready for dialogue and cooperation based on mutual respect and awareness of cultural differences. The participation of Ukrainian companies in international exhibitions, forums, business meetings, and joint projects contributes to promoting a positive image of the country. High-quality goods and services, adherence to ethical business standards, and the ability to adapt to the cultural characteristics of other countries foster trust in Ukrainian brands and help to dismantle stereotypes, presenting Ukraine as a modern and innovative state with significant potential. The cross-cultural competence of Ukrainian business representatives contributes not only to economic growth but also to the development of diplomatic relations, enabling the formation of stable ties grounded in cultural understanding and positively influencing Ukraine's reputation in the eyes of the international community.

Errors in the interpretation of cultural codes may cause serious damage to a company's reputation, particularly when its activities extend to international markets. Symbols, colours, gestures, or advertising messages that are perceived neutrally or positively in one culture may be offensive or inappropriate in another. Such mistakes can provoke negative reactions in the media and social networks, reduce consumer trust, lead to boycotts, and result in financial losses. In a globalised world where information spreads instantly, even a single misstep may cause long-term

reputational harm and adversely affect the image of the state itself. For example, inappropriate statements may create a distorted impression among consumers regarding the culture, values, or level of respect for other peoples on the part of the exporting country. This can complicate diplomatic relations, provoke international scandals, and even influence the investment attractiveness of the state. Therefore, sensitivity to cultural codes is not only an ethical requirement but also a strategic necessity.

A powerful instrument of cross-cultural communication in forming a positive image of Ukraine worldwide is the Ukrainian diaspora and cultural centres, whose activities not only promote Ukrainian culture but also contribute to international support, shaping the image of Ukraine as a modern, democratic, and cooperative state. Ya. Harhaun (2023) notes that the Ukrainian diaspora has played an exceptionally important role in creating a global Ukrainian space and has consistently occupied a special position in popularising Ukrainian culture and forming a positive image of Ukrainians abroad. Successful cultural diplomacy through the Ukrainian diaspora strengthens international ties and creates favourable conditions for political, economic, and humanitarian partnership. By organising cultural events, exhibitions, concerts, Ukrainian culture days, and film screenings, these institutions familiarise foreign audiences with the rich history, traditions, art, and contemporary achievements of Ukraine. This not only reinforces the national identity of Ukrainians abroad but also shapes international perceptions of Ukraine as a culturally rich, open, and European state.

Cultural centres and Ukrainian communities actively participate in cross-cultural dialogue, serving as a bridge between Ukraine and their countries of residence. The role of such centres has become particularly significant during the Russian-Ukrainian war, when cultural diplomacy functions as an instrument of “soft power” to strengthen global support for Ukraine. In addition to their cultural mission, the diaspora also per-

forms an informational and educational function by disseminating objective data on the political situation in Ukraine and providing accurate information about the war, reforms, and the European aspirations of the Ukrainian people. Through social networks, blogs, media outlets, and their own platforms, representatives of the diaspora actively counter disinformation and support Ukraine's interests in international forums. According to V. Makar (2024), the directions of public diplomacy of the Ukrainian diaspora have intensified in response to the aggression of the Russian Federation and its attempts to undermine Ukraine's independence and national self-awareness.

For Ukraine, which is actively promoting its image as a democratic, open, and European state, it is essential to employ effective communication tools that take into account the cultural differences of target audiences. Such tools include media platforms, cultural diplomacy initiatives, educational programmes, and public statements by officials, all of which should correspond to the cultural context of the audience addressed. One important practice for improving cross-cultural communication is the involvement of intercultural mediators – specialists who are well acquainted with both Ukrainian and foreign cultures and who facilitate the accurate transmission not only of language, but also of meanings, symbols, and values. In addition, content adaptation plays a crucial role: information campaigns should consider cultural norms, traditions, and patterns of audience perception in order to avoid misunderstandings or negative interpretations. J. Berry *et al.* (2007) note that in contemporary conditions, effective intercultural interaction requires a shared interpretation of behaviour and socio-political processes by all participants in communication. Practices of cultural exchange also contribute to the development of a positive image of Ukraine. The organisation of festivals, exhibitions, and tours of Ukrainian artists abroad creates opportunities to demonstrate the richness, uniqueness, and modern development of Ukrainian culture and

to establish an emotional connection between foreign audiences and Ukrainian identity, which constitutes an important element of “soft power”.

Owing to the Internet, information now spreads instantly; therefore, Ukraine must actively shape its own narrative through digital diplomacy tools. A successful online strategy enables the countering of disinformation and the strengthening of trust at the international level. According to M. Lashkina *et al.* (2023), Russia’s war against Ukraine is fundamentally existential in nature and rooted in the culture and historical narratives of an imperial state; consequently, these negative tendencies can be mitigated through continuous intercultural dialogue within society and the

professional representation of national diversity in the media space.

In contemporary conditions, cross-cultural communication facilitates the dissemination of truthful information about the war in Ukraine and the counteraction of disinformation campaigns. Through public diplomacy, Ukraine is presented as a democratic state open to the world, fighting not only for its independence but also for shared European values of freedom and dignity. In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, cross-cultural communication encompasses political, informational, cultural, and psychological dimensions that interact in shaping the international perception of Ukraine (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Aspects of cross-cultural communication in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war

Aspect	Content / manifestations	Features in wartime
Political context	Ukraine’s communication with the international community through diplomatic channels, media, and social networks	Shifting the emphasis from cultural dialogue to the fight for truth, freedom, and support for Ukraine
Information space	Sharing news, visual content, and messages in global media	Strengthening the role of information security, combating fake news and Russian propaganda
Language factor	Using Ukrainian, English and other foreign languages for international communication	Active dissemination of the Ukrainian language as an element of identity and resistance to Russian aggression
Emotional component	High empathy and support for Ukraine in the world through humanitarian stories, art, and eyewitness accounts	Formation of a positive emotional image of Ukraine as a state that protects human values
Cultural diplomacy	Representation of Ukrainian culture through art, language, traditions, cinema	Increasing the number of international cultural initiatives aimed at supporting Ukraine
Digital communication	Using social media, digital platforms, and blogs to disseminate information	Social media is becoming the main tool for communication, mobilisation and solidarity
International audience	Communication with different cultures of the world – European, American, Asian, etc.	The need to adapt messages to the cultural characteristics of different audiences
The role of the diaspora	Ukrainian communities abroad as communication intermediaries	Activation of the diaspora in conveying the truth about the war, supporting Ukrainian initiatives
Normative and value dimension	Orientation towards common democratic, humanistic values	Emphasising the contrast between the Ukrainian struggle for freedom and Russian aggression
The effect of mutual understanding	Expanding the world’s knowledge about Ukraine, its culture, history, and the Ukrainian people	Growing international solidarity, forming a long-term positive image of Ukraine

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the works of Ya. Harhaun (2023), M. Lashkina *et al.* (2023), V. Makar (2024), J. Nye (2024), O. Derevyanko (2025)

The use of social networks as a tool of cross-cultural communication enables Ukraine to interact directly with foreign audiences and to establish an open dialogue. It is the combination of a strategic approach, cultural sensitivity, and modern technologies that can strengthen positive perceptions of Ukraine on the global stage. The media, as part of the digital environment, make it possible to present the Ukrainian perspective on significant international events and to explain the context of internal transformations. Through translated materials, documentaries, analytical articles, and cultural projects, foreign audiences gain a deeper understanding of the situation in Ukraine. In particular, following the outbreak of the full-scale war with Russia, Ukrainian media became a source of reliable information for many international outlets, which strengthened trust in the Ukrainian narrative.

Social networks have become instruments of direct communication with audiences worldwide, enabling the rapid dissemination of cultural initiatives. Prominent Ukrainians, including artists, military personnel, and volunteers, use their accounts as platforms of digital diplomacy, creating emotional connections with the international community and contributing to the formation of a positive image of Ukraine through active engagement in the global information space. Cross-cultural communication supported by the media and social networks helps Ukraine to establish itself as a modern, free, and culturally rich state, representing an important component of European civilisation.

Through participation in global initiatives and projects, Ukraine has the opportunity to demonstrate its openness and readiness for cooperation, as well as to share its experience and cultural heritage with other countries. This facilitates mutual understanding between peoples, helps to overcome stereotypes, and strengthens the international authority of the state. O. Kvasha & A. Syniakova (2019) note that cooperation with the European Union is one of the key means of strengthening a country's position within the

global system of international relations, realising national interests, and building an economically developed and democratic state. Cross-cultural communication within the framework of international cooperation not only supports the integration of Ukrainian society into global processes but also creates a platform for presenting Ukraine's values, history, and culture. Participation in programmes of international organisations such as the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and NATO enables Ukraine to promote issues related to human rights, democracy, education, and culture while demonstrating an active civic stance. Through joint cultural, scientific, and humanitarian projects, the international community comes to perceive Ukraine not only as a country affected by war, but also as a nation that is dynamically developing and capable of contributing to global progress. Engagement in international dialogue through cooperation with international organisations also strengthens trust in Ukraine among foreign partners, opening new opportunities for diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations and, in the long term, reinforcing the country's positive image. Therefore, shaping Ukraine's image as a responsible, reliable, and creative partner constitutes a key task of foreign policy, and international cooperation through cross-cultural communication plays a decisive role in this process.

Based on the analysis conducted, a set of authorial recommendations was developed. For the effective formation of a positive image of Ukraine, it is essential that officials, diplomats, artists, journalists, and other communicators possess well-developed cross-cultural interaction skills. Therefore, systematic training in the fundamentals of cross-cultural communication should be ensured in order to prevent misunderstandings and to build trust between Ukraine and other countries. Ukraine has a rich historical and cultural heritage that should be actively presented on the international stage. Consequently, participation in international festivals, exhibitions, and forums should be expanded, where

representatives of Ukraine can share their culture, art, language, and traditions as a means of establishing cross-cultural ties. Ukrainian communities abroad should function as powerful ambassadors of the state; thus, it is advisable to develop programmes supporting diaspora initiatives in the fields of culture, education, business, and public diplomacy, as well as to promote the exchange of experience between Ukrainians within the country and abroad.

Under the current conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war, cross-cultural communication requires particular attention to the formation of a truthful, ethical, and positive image of Ukraine worldwide. It is therefore recommended to emphasise values that are shared across cultures – freedom, dignity, solidarity, and the right to self-determination – which can facilitate a deeper understanding of the Ukrainian context among foreign audiences. It is important to employ the instruments of public diplomacy, intercultural dialogue, and digital media to disseminate reliable information about events in Ukraine while avoiding hate speech. International educational programmes, exchanges, and partnerships between Ukrainian and foreign educational institutions should be expanded, as they create opportunities for mutual cultural understanding, reduce stereotypes about Ukraine, and support the long-term development of trust among younger generations abroad. The wider dissemination of cross-cultural programmes, training initiatives, and forums will contribute to the formation of a culture of dialogue, mutual respect, and openness towards other peoples. The successful implementation of these measures will strengthen Ukraine's international image as a modern, democratic, and multicultural state. At the governmental level, it is necessary to establish or reinforce specialised institutions and programmes responsible for the development of cross-cultural dialogue. It is also advisable to involve experts in communication, linguistics, sociology, and international relations in the formulation of national strategies in the field of public diplomacy.

## Conclusions

Cross-cultural communication is an important instrument in shaping a positive image of Ukraine, as it enables the effective representation of its cultural heritage and values and contributes to the construction of an image of an open and culturally rich state. At the same time, it requires Ukrainian representatives to possess a high level of intercultural competence. The principal elements of cross-cultural communication include language, non-verbal signs, values, behavioural norms, and cultural context; therefore, successful cross-cultural interaction demands careful attention to these components and a willingness to adapt to the specific features of another culture. International cultural and educational projects, as well as participation in forums and exchange programmes, provide stable international support for Ukraine and strengthen its global standing. However, cross-cultural communication is accompanied by certain challenges, including language barriers, stereotypes, culture shock, and prejudice, which complicate mutual understanding. Communication errors may lead to misunderstandings, reinforce stereotypes, or even provoke international conflicts; consequently, maintaining cultural sensitivity in diplomacy, business, the media, and education is of critical importance. In the digital age, the media and social networks play a significant role by enabling the rapid formation of international perceptions of Ukraine and by counteracting negative informational influences. In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, cross-cultural communication has become a key means of conveying truthful information and combating disinformation, as it encompasses political, informational, cultural, and psychological dimensions that together shape international support and solidarity. The growth of migration stimulates the development of intercultural dialogue within Ukrainian society and highlights the increasing need for intercultural competence, which is progressively being integrated into educational programmes. The use of digital technologies and online platforms expands opportunities for international interaction and

contributes to the formation of Ukraine's image as a modern, democratic, and multicultural state. This study does not claim to provide an exhaustive account of cross-cultural communication; however, it remains relevant and significant for understanding the formation of a positive image of Ukraine in the world. Prospects for further research lie in a more in-depth analysis of the mechanisms of cross-cultural communication, which will contribute to more effective strategies for shaping Ukraine's international image, taking into account contemporary globalisation processes and the dynamics of the international information environment.

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## Крос-культурна комунікація як інструмент формування позитивного іміджу України у світі

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**Анотація.** Сучасні геополітичні виклики та необхідність активної інтеграції України у глобальний інформаційний простір визначили важливість крос-культурної комунікації для формування її позитивного іміджу. Метою дослідження було з'ясувати роль крос-культурної комунікації у формуванні позитивного іміджу України на міжнародній арені та визначити ефективні механізми її використання. Доведено, що крос-культурна комунікація дає змогу Україні налагоджувати взаєморозуміння з різними народами, формуючи довіру, підтримку і солідарність на світовій арені. Наголошено, що питання формування позитивного іміджу України у світі є стратегічно важливим у контексті її інтеграції до європейського і світового співтовариства. Проаналізовано, що через мову, мистецтво, науку, освіту, дипломатію та інші форми комунікації Україна може доносити до світу свої цінності, історію, традиції й сучасні досягнення, а також руйнувати стереотипи та формувати довіру. Показано, що крос-культурна взаємодія також дає змогу українському народу демонструвати свою ідентичність, незламність і духовну силу, що є надзвичайно важливим в умовах боротьби за власну незалежність і міжнародну суб'єктність. Доведено, що крос-культурна комунікація є не лише засобом культурного обміну, а й потужним інструментом стратегічної комунікації, що допомагає Україні формувати позитивний імідж, зміцнювати міжнародні зв'язки і закріплювати свою позицію на глобальній арені. Обґрунтовано, що розвиток крос-культурної компетентності сприяє підвищенню якості зовнішньополітичної, дипломатичної, медійної та культурної взаємодії, а через діалог культур, промоцію української ідентичності, мистецтва, мови і цінностей, держава може формувати привабливий, відкритий, прогресивний імідж і позитивно впливати на міжнародне партнерство, туризм, інвестиційну привабливість і культурну дипломатію, що є ключовими складовими стратегії сталого розвитку України у глобальному середовищі. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані у наступних наукових теоретичних розвідках щодо культурної дипломатії

**Ключові слова:** імідж держави; публічна дипломатія; медіа; глобалізація; міжнародні комунікації