SERIE
DE CONFERENCIAS

Check for updates

ORIGINAL

# The Role of Cultural and Ethnic Identity in Contemporary Media Dynamics: Market Potential and Influence

## El papel de la identidad cultural y étnica en la dinámica de los medios de comunicación contemporáneos: Potencial de mercado e influencia

Volodymyr Diakiv[1] ✉, Oleksii Koval[2], Inesh Kdyrova[3], Iryna Voitenko[4]

[1]Department of Ukrainian Language, Lviv Polytechnic National University; Ethnology Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Lviv, Ukraine.
[2]Interregional Academy of Personnel Management, Kyiv, Ukraine.
[3]Department of Musical Popular Art, Communal Higher Educational Establishment of Kyiv Regional Council "Pavlo Chubynsky Academy of Arts", Kyiv, Ukraine.
[4]Department of Foreign and Ukrainian Philology, Faculty of Digital Educational and Social Technologies, Lutsk National Technical University, Lutsk, Ukraine.

**ABSTRACT**

**Introduction:** the research aims to elucidate the role of the media and the media market in the contemporary geopolitical landscape, both at the global and national levels. This will be achieved by examining the media's potential to contribute to conflict within ethnic and cultural identity patterns and the formation and persistence of these patterns.

**Method:** the foundation of research consists of hypotheses, notions, concepts, and terminology devised in the field of globalisation and geopolitics and inseparable from national-cultural identity. Moreover, systemic, synergetic, dialectical, comparative, socio-cultural, and civilisational approaches constitute the methodological apparatus of the research.

**Results:** findings demonstrate that media products, as well as the media market itself, represent a resource considerably contributing to ethnic conflict mobilisation. In mass communication, social actors put all efforts into presenting their peace/conflict projects as beneficial ones to society. The findings also suggest that today, studies in media, journalism, and contemporary do not pay much attention to critical assessment of the role of news media in propaganda production and distribution on the basement of narratives within the domain of ethnic and cultural identity. Thus, the evident need for filling this research gap is stressed.

**Conclusions:** in the current conditions, the media market has grown and transformed into a full-blown and inherent constituent of postclassical geopolitics. The issue concerning how culture's symbolic capital functions in the information/media realm is increasingly becoming more than just an abstract theoretical one; it is becoming strategically important from a geopolitical standpoint.

**Keywords:** Folk Religion; Traditional Culture; Social Groups; Social Communications or Social Institutions; Ethnic Identity; Information Warfare.

**RESUMEN**

**Introducción:** la investigación pretende dilucidar el papel de los medios de comunicación y del mercado mediático en el panorama geopolítico contemporáneo, tanto a escala mundial como nacional. Para ello se examinará el potencial de los medios de comunicación para contribuir al conflicto dentro de los patrones de

identidad étnica y cultural y la formación y persistencia de dichos patrones.

**Método:** la base de la investigación consiste en hipótesis, nociones, conceptos y terminología concebidos en el ámbito de la globalización y la geopolítica e inseparables de la identidad nacional-cultural. Además, los enfoques sistémico, sinérgico, dialéctico, comparativo, sociocultural y civilizacional constituyen el aparato metodológico de la investigación.

**Resultados:** los resultados demuestran que los productos de los medios de comunicación, así como el propio mercado mediático, representan un recurso que contribuye considerablemente a la movilización en torno al conflicto étnico. En la comunicación de masas, los actores sociales ponen todo su empeño en presentar sus proyectos de paz/conflicto como beneficiosos para la sociedad. Las conclusiones también sugieren que, en la actualidad, los estudios sobre medios de comunicación, periodismo y contemporaneidad no prestan demasiada atención a la evaluación crítica del papel de los medios informativos en la producción y distribución de propaganda sobre el fundamento de las narrativas en el ámbito de la identidad étnica y cultural. Así pues, se subraya la evidente necesidad de colmar esta laguna en la investigación.

**Conclusiones:** en las condiciones actuales, el mercado de los medios de comunicación ha crecido y se ha transformado en un componente pleno e inherente de la geopolítica postclásica. La cuestión de cómo funciona el capital simbólico de la cultura en el ámbito de la información y los medios de comunicación se está convirtiendo cada vez más en algo más que una mera cuestión teórica abstracta: está adquiriendo una importancia estratégica desde el punto de vista geopolítico.

**Palabras clave:** Religión Popular; Cultura Tradicional; Grupos Sociales; Comunicación Social o Instituciones Sociales; Identidad Étnica; Guerra de Información.

## INTRODUCTION

On the cusp of the 20th and 21st centuries, the globalisation epoch propagates "universal", "unified" lifestyles and values 'moulds', simultaneously contributing to intensifying studying national identity and ethnic culture. Representatives of many scientific directions and disciplines, such as cultural and political scientists, historians, sociologists, philosophers, art experts, and psychologists, manifest their research interest in studying ethnic culture patterns and identity strategies and maintaining them as specific cultural markers of social action.

The 21st-century processes of globalisation and regionalisation within the development of the global world system served as determinants of multi-directional social processes in ethnic culture. The development of globalisation, localisation, and regionalisation processes, with dialectical interconnection within geopolitical, geoeconomic, and geocultural subsystems of the global world macro-system and global Internet information space shaping, enabled overcoming asymmetry in the information distribution. There is an increase in information accessibility, which, in turn, acts as a determinant or catalyst of socio-cultural processes of hybridisation, assimilation, and separation. The development of these processes is ongoing under the impact of higher rates of international competition, various geopolitical cataclysms, and disbalances in the global players' geoeconomic interests in world commodity markets, manufacturers, and other global business actors.

People's desire to maintain their ethnocultural identity may be actively manipulated through social communication channels that allow for the potential of ideology-nature influence on ethnocultural life. This supports institutionalised management patterns in society that are not permitted by law. Of course, the media play a crucial role in these channels.

The traditional ethnic culture resiliency in contemporary societies is frequently boiled down just to a discussion concerning language functioning and the popularisation of ethnic groups' cultural heritage within a new environment of communication. At the same time, the problematics of individual self-determination in the sense of ethnicity in the new cultural landscape is no less important than the language issue in frames of discussions of ethnic culture today's transformation. The new reality of social and cultural patterns generates in a person striving to search for other forms of his identity representation, the ones which are different from the usual, since the cultural space has changed, and web space, communications, and the media sphere have acquired a significant role here. Moreover, one should understand that ethnic identity is not disappearing in today's world, but this criterion is again becoming foundational. Therefore, it is customary to look for ethnic self-expression and new chances and alternatives that the media presents.

The fundamental aspect of the modern age is the integration of humanity's most significant cultural and educational accomplishments and a subsequent, deliberate process of ethnocultural resurrection, which scholars appropriately refer to as "ethnic renaissance". Furthermore, this era's unique characteristic is the profound influence of mass and ethnic culture on personality development. The contradiction of trends emerged today in civilisation development: one can see global structure creation on the one hand and the world's segmentation

on the other. Moreover, strengthening one trend inevitably implies activating the other.[1]

Meanwhile, the media market and media and media products constitute an "ethnic conflict mobilisation resource".[2] Social actors who participate in mass communication attempt to ensure that society benefits from their peace/conflict projects and the necessity of achieving acceptable peace. Influence groups 'contest' for their peace/conflict projects' dominance is conducted in frames of some mass consciousness discourse fields: the domain of comprehension and vision concerning own ethnic group and neighbouring countries' history; the domain of state policy interpretation as the one designed for fencing or, on the contrary, globalisation; the international relations interpretation area; and the sphere of shaping attitudes of interpersonal communication of situational nature with other ethnic and national groups.

In turn, cultural identity refers to a set of characteristics linked with distinct groups that are sometimes considered stable yet change with time. Throughout history, the mass media has played an important role in shaping national cultures and identities. The press, film, radio, and television have directly impacted national cultures and identities in the landscape of nation-states' global systems. Cultural genocide may occur when government institutions, the dominant economy, and society work together to destroy a minority group's cultural identity. It may be inert if the institutions enjoying dominance let the demographic, linguistic, or economic forces generated by previous activities have their natural course. If minorities do not manifest resistance, their identities may be erased in both scenarios.

Mann[3] correctly asserts that the creation of ethnic identity is a multidimensional phenomenon involving biological, social, cultural, psychological, and political interactions. Ethnicity emerges from collective experiences, geographical limits, biological imperatives, and political goals, beginning with the bond between a newborn, mother, and family. Intercultural encounters are equally important in many theories of ethnic identity. Indeed, when cultural minorities struggle to escape oppression and exercise their fundamental human right to self-determination, cultural collisions can play an important role in the construction of ethnic identities.

Ethnic and cultural identity are, therefore, inextricably linked. As a result, any impact on one of them will unavoidably affect the other.[4] However, these two elements gain the ability to emerge under the influence of globalisation and intricate sociopolitical processes within nation-states and on a regional scale. This allows identity as a system to acquire highly unusual properties, particularly the ability to thoroughly combine indigenous ethnic identity with "McDonaldized" consumer culture. However, its emergence also creates a greater possibility for conflict. The media exploits hybridised identities for political and economic ends, frequently igniting harmful processes.

One cannot exaggerate the media's capacity to create conflict; one of the most extreme manifestations of tensions between conflicting issues is the struggle between values and identity.[5] Because it creates vast prospects for cultural growth, which turns into influence and, ultimately, a challenge to cultural sovereignty, reproducing cultural commodities is resourceful regarding conflict potential.[6,7] The media sphere has a significant role in this system; it may serve as a mediator between the creator of a cultural or informational product text and the recipient, and it is also extraterritorial. The trend for cultures to become more internationalised within the framework of globalism forces the adoption of tactics for the cultural self-identification of nations and peoples, which can result in the formation of sharp tensions and, ultimately, conflict.

Political elites (as well as economic ones) frequently employ modern mass media as a weapon of suggestion and manipulation since they effectively influence public opinion.[8] The study of the current media market's landscape, the behaviour of its players and objects, power balance vectors, and conflictogenic potential is a critical scientific task that must be addressed not only in the fields of media studies and ethnic research but also in geopolitics.

The research objective is seen in identifying the role of the media and the media market in today geopolitical landscape within global and national domains, based on examining the media's conflictogenic potential in ethnic and cultural identity patterns.

## METHOD

The study's theoretical and methodological foundation is built on general scientific research concepts such as objectivity, scientific character, and logical and historical coherence. The research is based on notions and theories found in current scientists' studies on the issues of national-cultural identity, globalisation, and geopolitics. The study also employs analytical techniques such as civilisational, systemic, synergetic, dialectical, comparative, and socio-cultural. The study used systematic methodologies, comparative analysis, and historical methodology.

The main research tools employed in the process of research included content analysis and case study method. The following databases were used for choosing sources: JSTOR, GoogleScholar, ScienceDirect, ERIC. Preliminary search of sources was carried out based on keywords, and at the second stage of search elements of gounded theory (coding and categorization) allowed to make the search more accurate and specific.

## RESULTS

Proponents of primordialism acknowledge ethnicity as an enduring human trait and an objective truth. Ethnos represent changes in primordial and static, physiologically and socially driven relationships under the context of the primordial paradigm. Some scholars contend that this approach ignores changes in gender, language, and religious identities that occur over a person's life and are important for social relationships.[9]

The realities of migration and interethnic relations demonstrate that ethnic groups are not unique, static, and separate entities. National identity may be defined as a connection resulting from a sense of innate spiritual affinity or communal allegiance.[10]

Within the instrumentalist perspective, ethnicity is the product of political myths that cultural elites have constructed and exploited in their pursuit of power and benefit. Elite rivalry within constraints set by political and economic reality gives rise to ethnicity.[11] Ethnicity is a tool for social group stratification based on pragmatic and consumerist ideals in a mass culture society.

One of the dimensions of social mobility is ethnocultural identification. It makes it possible to advance in status and validate that one's interests come first. In order to accomplish their objectives, people intentionally mobilise ethnic symbols. Therefore, ethnicity is viewed as the outcome of the political class's mobilisation of social groupings.

Within the framework of the constructivist paradigm, conditioned by the principles of neo-Kantianism, "philosophy of life", and post-structuralism, an ethnic group is described by socio-psychological characteristics. The distinctions among community members provide the fundamental traits of social groupings.[12,13,14,15] Ethnic groups are always present in the context of intergroup interaction, according to constructivists.

Ethnicity is believed to be an intellectual construct that permeates society through belonging to a particular group. Shared ancestry, language, and culture determine ethnicity. However, these traits are not always present. They represent the simulated outcomes of purposeful efforts by authors, scientists, and politicians.

Ethno-symbolism, whose most prominent thinker is E. Smith, occupies an intermediate stance between primordialism and constructivism.[16] According to ethno-symbolism theory, numerous ethnic groups emerged even in the pre-industrial age, reflecting populations with shared cultural features, historical memories, beliefs about common ancestors, and cohesion degree.

Some of these communities advanced to a new degree of cultural and economic integration and standardisation, establishing links to a specific historical area and developing their laws and traditions. They formed a type of ethnic core around which the population was cantered, and they see this solidarity, cultural standards, myths, and traditions as their own.[17]

At the beginning of the 21st century, Cottle[18] acknowledged that the media significantly influences the public's perception of uneven social connections and the use of cultural authority. For example, public members are invited to develop a sense of who "we" are and who "we" are not through representations, such as *us* and *them, colonised* and *coloniser*, *citizen* and *foreigner*, *normal* and *deviant*, *the west* and *the east*. One of the bright examples is the division between the "Global North: and "Global South".

Using such strategies, social interests mobilised across society are identified, rendered unique, and frequently subject to discrimination. However, the media may promote social and cultural diversity by creating critical venues for contesting, opposing, and changing imposed identities or other people's interests. The media world of today is rapidly shifting.[18]

According to Behm-Morawitz[19], there is abundant racial and ethnic representation in the media, which might alter people's ideas about themselves. People contribute to and consume media representations of race and ethnicity. These representations influence the development of racial and ethnic identities via various psychological mechanisms, including social comparison and classification.

Social actors connect with similar and dissimilar individuals through mediated environments such as television, movies, video games, social media, and unmediated interpersonal and group interactions.[20,21] These mediated experiences shape personal identity formation in various ways, including racial and ethnic identity.

We subconsciously process experiences and images of racial or ethnic nature through media. The media can impact how we see racial and ethnic identities, including our own. The presence and absence of racial or ethnic persons, as well as their representation, communicate implicit signals about race and ethnicity more often than 'endogenous' discussions of these themes in the media. Media stereotyping of racial and ethnic minorities has been shown to hurt how people perceive them in real life. These mediated images help to shape racial and ethnic identities via a variety of cognitive processes.

Behm-Morawitz[19] believes that exposure to media messages regarding race or ethnicity may bring stereotypes about that group to the forefront. Similar to the stereotype threat example discussed earlier, media material has the potential to perpetuate unfavourable prejudices about a person's race or ethnicity. This might happen if you consume news, entertainment, or social media. Media priming effectively retrieves and activates a racial or ethnic stereotype from memory.

However, the media's enormous conflict-generating potential in an ethnic setting has recently been apparent

and has received scant attention. Surprisingly, the Rwandan experience has not resulted in an increase in study in this area.

When discussing the function of information impact in an ethnopolitical conflict, it is appropriate to use the example of Yugoslavia's civil war when the Bosnian peace process was on the verge of collapse in the summer of 1997. Diplomacy and military action threats proved ineffective in changing the situation. On Serbian nationalist-controlled news networks, multinational peacekeeping soldiers were increasingly referred to as "occupiers". For example, pictures of NATO tanks were interwoven with vintage footage from World War II depicting the Nazi occupation.

As a consequence, tensions increased. Meanwhile, international forces opted to use military equipment to combat undesirable propaganda. Within weeks, UN peacekeeping forces in Bosnia had seized critical television and radio broadcasting facilities, forcing the worst offenders off the air. However, in the subsequent legislative elections in the Bosnian Serb Republic, radical nationalists maintained their posts, even though their chauvinistic messaging was considerably reduced.[22]

This is the long-term consequence of media manipulation that highlights distinctions in ethnic and cultural identity. The potential for confrontation is postponed while their effectiveness is increased when these narratives are brought into the commercial media sphere and integrated into a commercial media product.

Ethnic and national characteristics are crucial in the context of national security in the modern world, especially when it comes to maintaining the stability of political systems and resolving internal political crises, the origins of which are often disputed on both an interethnic and international level in multiethnic states. When considering how the international space would develop in the future, many scholars in the 19th century were sure that, due to global processes like industrialisation, modernisation, and globalisation, nations and ethnic groups would soon transfer to a sort of relic in human history.[23]

However, Today's facts provide a different view of the globe, one marked by a sharp increase in residents' ethnic and national identity. The various ethnic groups, peoples, and nations currently declare their own specific choice of vector for self-identification and development. They also engage in dialogue as individual or collective actors, allowing them to change who they are and their development.

Resolving ethnopolitical conflicts and tensions is one of any country's primary duties in preserving sustainable development and national security. The idea of states' national security should be formed via a clear and complete analysis of such categories as country and ethnicity to avoid inconsistencies and hidden conflicts for the steady growth of the state. The institution of national-ethnic relations and the growth of that degree of national-ethnic tolerance in the vast majority of ethnic communities' conflict-prone locations should serve as the foundation for this study.

Most scholars should focus more on the impact of geopolitical issues while analysing and researching ethnopolitical processes.[24] Research shows that socio-economic concerns or the issue of nation-building, in general, are frequently the root cause of ethnopolitical process difficulties. However, the geopolitical reasons for ethnopolitical relationships are ignored when analysing analogous processes on state territory.

When studying ethnopolitical processes at the inter-civilisational level, such as intercultural conflict, the significance of surface ethnographical aspects is downplayed. Ethnic and cultural identities are, therefore, not seen as a cohesive system, and the media market's role in their formation is still not widely recognised.

The rise of virtual space and network information systems is forcing the rethink of arranging and protecting political space in geopolitics. The postclassical view of political space presented the challenge of translating the holy concepts of religion, soil, and blood, the foundation of classical geopolitics of daily life, into virtual space as the symbolic capital of national culture. The space battle occurs in the information field, where the cutting edge of postclassical geopolitics is.[25]

During the industrial period, the aggressor tried to take over a region by eliminating the means of production and industry. In the information society, however, the primary means of controlling space changed – now it implies controlling the individual (personality) and managing the worldview of entire peoples.

The information society's new realities have presented geopoliticians with an unusual challenge: analysing how information affects geopolitical problem-solving. Since it is evident that information influences have the power to change the state's primary geopolitical potential, the national mentality, culture, and moral state of its citizens, the question of the symbolic capital of culture in the information space is no longer merely an abstract theoretical one but is instead gaining strategic geopolitical significance.

Information rules the current global information arena, dominated by the Internet, mass media, and advertising. The future world's outlines are formed by the invisible hands of concealed information influence.[26] Global communication channels, especially the media industry, are transferring into an invisible virtual power struggle in geopolitical warfare. It is clear now that the most significant information revolution occurred in the media's backroom. It was linked to developing psychological and informational tools that successfully affect people's morals, feelings, and psychology. Without exaggeration, the outcomes of geopolitics' aggressive mastering of the new virtual information domain may be characterised as revolutionary.

The digital battleground now has more participants and more sophisticated strategies. Citizens will soon find themselves in the digital crossfire of global conflicts that use online platforms with convincing misinformation operations, according to the CBInsights journal, which focuses on the future of information warfare).[27] Figure 1 below shows the perspective of this future.
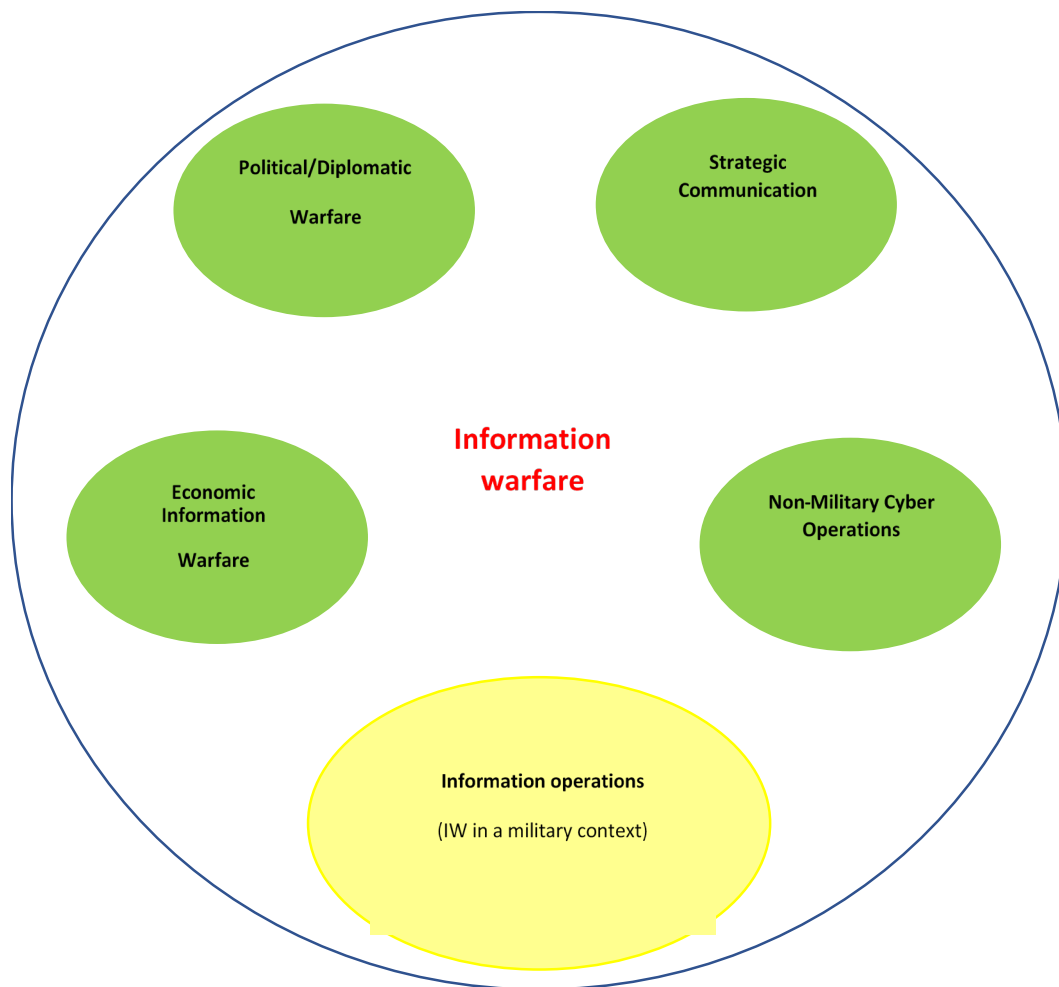


**Figure 1.** Changing dimensions of information warfare
**Source:** Mishra[28]

Because the agenda that is suggested based on an analysis of the media's realities raises awareness of the problem, piques interest in it globally, and, to some extent, acts as a catalyst for its resolution, journalism, among these new circumstances, stands out as a full-fledged international system actor.[29] Furthermore, how journalists cover events shapes how the issue is seen, which is crucial in the geopolitical "game" of creating power centres. However, nation-states frequently serve as the "field" for geopolitical games, and proxy conflicts frequently become instruments.

Once, US President Dwight Eisenhower gave the following definition to proxy wars: "wars fought by the hands of others".[30] The definition of a proxy war, which is considered a classic one, was suggested by American political scientist Karl Deutsch back in 1964: an international conflict between two foreign powers that takes place on the territory of a third country while posing as a dispute within that nation and using some of its resources, territory, and human resources to further primarily foreign objectives and strategies.[31]

In essence, a proxy war is a civil war that is either initiated by a foreign state or a third party to the conflict, or that is fought with the active assistance of its military, political, and resource bases. The prevalence of proxy conflicts in the modern world is intimately related to the creation and proliferation of nuclear weapons. [32] Using these weapons might have disastrous effects on all parties involved in a nuclear war. As a result, the nuclear countries have attempted - and are still attempting - to avoid direct armed conflict among themselves.

The history of the Indo-Pakistani hostilities is typical in this respect. Both nations have created or obtained nuclear weapons since the last direct conflict between India and Pakistan in 1971. These days, proxy warfare is being used to fight the battles between India and Pakistan. The "great powers" are simultaneously making

every effort to keep India and Pakistan from directly engaging in nuclear combat.[33]

The most evident "experimental area" for a regional proxy conflict whose characteristics and tactics have not yet been examined is Syria. On the surface, the Syrian conflict seems to be a conflict between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. The inconsistencies already present in society, such as confessional and regional ones, were only the first fuel for the social protest movement, which swiftly evolved into the most extreme kind of violent conflict.

Like every other Arab Spring nation, social protest was employed in Syria to gain political benefits and power. As a socio-psychological component, the ecumenical nature of the Syrian war serves as a flag to identify the parties and rally followers inside and outside of the "conflict territory".[23]

Tourmani[34] asserts that social media played a crucial role in the success of the Syrian uprising by enabling the formation of the protestors' status and demands, as well as their organisation and communication.

With the aid of the media, the parties are attempting to interpret additional alternatives for developing events in various ways to get the required public support. Much hinges on whether the nation's populace will accept the deployment of more troops or aid, how citizens of other nations will respond to the conflict's continued continuation, or how representatives of international organisations will respond when questioned about the particular actions' legitimacy. Many nations use public opinion creation to get the populace to accept their policies and provide the backing they need to take more action.

Residents in areas affected by proxy conflicts can suffer terrible repercussions. The destruction of infrastructure, homes, and life can result in long-term societal issues. Because of this, the world community is looking for solutions to put a stop to these wars. The problem is that the government does not recognise many proxy conflicts. As a result, it is frequently challenging to ascertain who is supporting the war.

Proxy conflicts reflect contemporary reality. Direct conflicts between superpowers have become uncommon due to globalisation and the interconnectedness of nations. However, it is now customary to subtly oppose and promote local disputes, mainly through the media. Under these circumstances, military warfare is governed by strategy and tactics rather than might. Even yet, proxy conflicts are still risky and can affect the entire world without large nations officially declaring war on one another.

Proxy wars are frequently started by artificially igniting long-simmering societal tensions with the aid of strong media campaigns, which are implemented gradually: first, the "grains" of interethnic and intercultural violence are tossed in. Then, in an extreme version akin to the media strategies of the Rwandan genocide, increasingly powerful tools are employed.[24]

There were some unfavourable instances of media being used as a trigger for wars and armed conflicts during the 20th century. A declaration of the helplessness of the individual and public opinion in the face of the mass media's mouthpiece marked the beginning of the actual understanding of the impact of mass media on audiences within the framework of the sociology of mass communications that emerged in the 20th century. According to sociologists, during World War I, the warring countries' propaganda machinery used a vast press. Kamalipour et al.[22] said, "Newspapers dragged us into the war".

Mass media has been a tremendously powerful tool for national and state elites' long-standing but equally successful strategy of mobilising the masses during times of conflict in order to deflect attention from internal political issues and achieve social cohesion based on hostility toward an external enemy. In the 1930s, authoritarian nations' propaganda machines employed consciousness manipulation strategies to inflate racial and class prejudice, xenophobia, and violence to "perfection". During the Weimar Republic, Germany's defeat in the war was identified, not without the assistance of newspapers, as the source of the economic crisis and everyday troubles of the ordinary people, and the energy of social anger was turned into calls for vengeance.

As is well known, the media played a critical part in the Rwandan genocide. Media spokespeople aggressively incited ethnic animosity and publicly advocated for violence and mass killings. The daily Kangura, the state-run Radio Rwanda, and the private radio station Thousand Hills played significant roles. Live radio broadcasters referred to Tutsi as "inyenzi" bugs. Terrible slogans were shouted every day: "Work, work, the graves are not full yet!"

The government of Rwanda intentionally utilised the media as a weapon of mass devastation. Because of their reach, propagandist slogans were heard in every home. The Hutus were given clear orders to slaughter the Tutsis, as well as approbation for such crimes. Propagandists preached brutality and violence as the only way to fight for existence. A few years later, the International Tribunal for Rwanda prosecuted the genocide's planners and perpetrators. Journalists who advocated violence and politicians who exploited the media to instigate conflict were penalised.[35]

Ethnic or national 'fence' is another 'efficient' way to increase antagonism and restrict communication links. Own ethnic group or nation is regarded as superior to all other ethnic groups or cultures and viewed as inferior or possibly hostile. Because of the persuasive impact of the mainstream media, the people believe a ring of adversaries encircles them.

The notions of racial supremacy and ethnic fence through the prohibition of interracial marriages were

particularly prominent in Nazi philosophy. They were effectively disseminated through German media and the press. They were, nonetheless, present in the information and political fields of all of the Hitler coalition's nations. The illusion of being surrounded by adversaries throughout the whole border perimeter continues to be successfully generated in the minds of audiences in rogue regimes such as North Korea.

Stigmatisation based on race or class is another powerful way of inciting conflict behaviour. Intensifying national antipathy toward "aliens" and identifying particular ethnic minorities as "scapegoats" is a common strategy for intensifying confrontations, sometimes carried out with the assistance of the media. This kind of "labelling" necessarily causes mutual estrangement and increasing antagonism between the majority ethnic group and ethnic minorities.

Troszyński and El-Ghamari[36] analysed the perspectives on migration in the Polish media from 2015 to 2018. The media content analysis was built on a foundation of press, television, and internet surveillance. The graph below (figure 2) shows the number of migration-related newspaper pieces, internet articles, and television broadcasts from 2015 to 2018. The results revealed a clear distinction between liberal and conservative rhetoric.

These differences in topic, tone, and attitude were noticeable in the depictions of the migrant crisis. The conservative media reported only the opposing aspects of migration; if Poland did not have such issues, they moved their attention to anti-immigrant marches throughout Europe. The liberal media has emphasised the importance of sympathy for refugees and the particular nature of migration to Poland, namely from Ukraine. However, the main difference was each media outlet's political leanings.

Based on this specific aspect, the authors demonstrated disparities in media coverage. Political parties were not associated with tabloid reporting, criticising the opposition and government policies. Troszyński and El-Ghamari[36] primarily focus on the securitisation of migration in their analysis. Regardless of political differences, security is discussed and analysed in every discourse. However, the study found that right-wing news accentuates the gravity of threats.
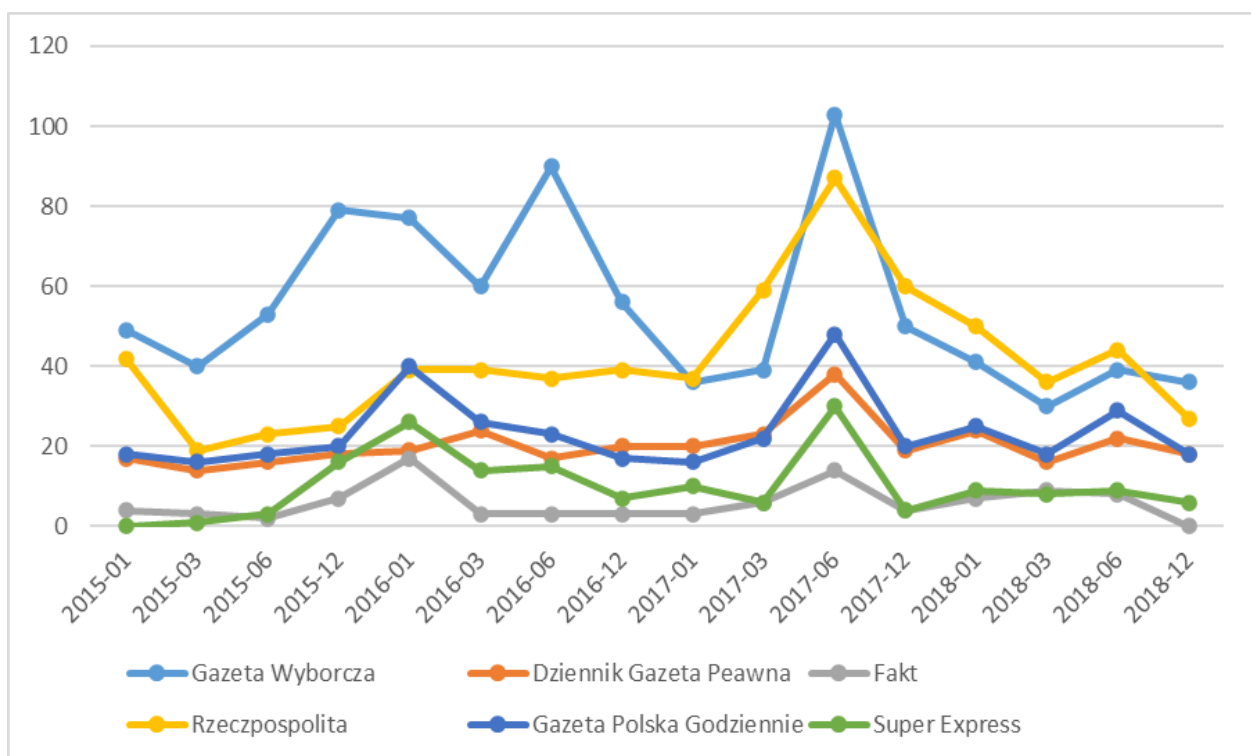


**Figure 2.** Number of texts concerning migrants in the Polish media 2015–2018
**Source:** Troszyński and El-Ghamari[36]

The myth narrative about the besieged fortress, built and communicated to the public via controlled media, incorporates historical and patriotic mythological tales, a preference for affiliation with a stereotyped positive reference group, and a stereotypical picture of the adversary.[37]

Within mass culture, the image of the opponent might become caricatured and clichéd as a constituent of the media market's offerings.

## DISCUSSION

Belonging to an ethnic community is one of humanity's most fundamental wants. Personal identification

procedures cannot be completed without being aware of an ethnic group's socio-cultural paradigm. This mostly illogical process is a source of disputes typically caused by a breach of identification procedures. Scholars describe ethnic conflict as any struggle between groups, ranging from genuine competition for finite resources to imagined divergence of interests, in which at least one side views the other party as characterised by its members' ethnicity.[18]

The conflict-inclined character of ethnic identification procedures compels the media to devote closer attention to this issue. Media professionals must aggressively convey information containing stereotypes, facts, and ideas. As a result, readers, viewers, and listeners create distinct pictures, views, and attitudes (which are not necessarily true) about certain subjects. In most circumstances, communicators seek to achieve a particular purpose by delivering carefully prepared information to the audience. Modern mass media creates reality through various propaganda strategies and methods: they may draw attention to an event or phenomenon, transform it into a sensation, and divert people.

Ethnic stereotypes are frequently associated with perception. They emerge spontaneously and do not necessarily correspond with experience, but they affect the construction of new experiences, even if they are erroneous. Another distinguishing element of ethnic stereotypes is their stability, which may vary over time. In the twenty-first century, when the identity problem remains a reality in most nations throughout the world, the mass media use stereotyping to safeguard ethnic identity. It is evident that a person always considers "own" as "familiar, close" and "alien" as "unfamiliar".

The first is seen positively, but the second is frequently wary and sometimes antagonistic. Professional journalists, in order to protect one group's ethnic identity, broadcast material to the public that distorts facts about another group, employing the "we-they" conflict that is increasingly common in mass media.

When an ethnic conflict emerges, negative ethnic stereotypes are utilised in the mass media to reinforce the "image of the enemy", dehumanise the opponent, and place him beyond the scope of universal standards and principles.[38,39] Stereotyping, which serves as the foundation of propaganda, enables interested parties to control public awareness through the media, instil false beliefs, and create biases against the opposing ethnic group.

The media in Australia has surfaced as a significant source of concern in various government examinations into racism and race relations. As a result, the Inquiry into Black Deaths in Custody, a four-year endeavour that examined over a hundred cases of Aboriginal people dying in jail or under police custody, recommended immediate action to improve media coverage of Aboriginal people living alongside white people. A thorough overhaul of the racial curriculum at journalism schools was one of the ideas.

The National Inquiry into Racist Violence also revealed that the public was severely underinformed about the diversity of experiences as a result of the media's key role in limiting communication between racial and ethnic groupings. While some newspapers of rural communities' were specified as significant contributors to the rise in local interracial friction, the article's central thesis was that the media did not adequately represent diversity and only covered minorities when they threatened the established social order or system of values. It also pushed for affirmative action programmes to place people of minority populations in mainstream media jobs and initiatives to improve journalist education and training.[35]

Given the explicit government commitment to multiculturalism in terms of cultural variety and reconciliation in settler/Indigenous people connections, it is not surprising that these comparable principles are propagated across the bureaucracy. The national government requires that the media follow Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and merit-based employment standards for women. It also requires that the principles of Access and Equity be maintained while delivering services and meeting the demands of consumers and clients in the public sector.

These rules can be challenging to implement since there has been ongoing criticism that the benchmarking concepts included in the programmes and the criteria for correct conduct contain presumptions that discriminate against members of marginalised ethnic groups. The more such individuals stray from the majority's norms regarding colour, language, accent, cultural customs, and belief systems, the more difficult it will be for them to fit into the unwritten criteria that decision-makers adhere to.

Finally, examine the concept of cultural genocide, which can only be carried out in the present period via the media. There is a range of ways in which cultural genocide differs from physical one. Firstly, cultural genocide damages a person's spirit, community, and way of life, whereas physical genocide kills. Second, actual genocide requires a dominating group to join in the endeavour to physically eliminate the minority actively. Cultural genocide usually occurs without conscious engagement.

Objective causes such as economic, demographic, or linguistic ones, which the dominant group may promote or tolerate, might eliminate the minority group. Third, a government executes physical genocide as part of national strategy. Non-state actors such as the media, property developers, and multinational corporations may even intentionally encourage cultural genocide.

Cultural genocide differs from physical genocide in that it is more subtle and less severe as a result of these

causes. However, in case minorities and Indigenous people are compelled to become "modern", they lose the qualities that distinguish them as unique, different, or cultural or national entities, and this has become a powerful force in many areas of the world[40]. However, this "soft" version of genocide is quite effective in attaining geopolitical aims.

The geopolitics information paradigm, realised vis the media market landscape, implies that the primary goal of geopolitical technologies is changing a person and perverting his worldview and identity. The key anthropological challenge of geopolitics in the new conditions is the impact of virtual media reality on forming a person's mentality in a political information society, which influences patterns of ethnic and cultural identity. [41] Information conflicts exploit the harmful impacts of information technology, which improve the "anatomy of human destructiveness".[43] Military analysts characterise information-psychological weapons as non-lethal weapons of mass destruction that can provide a significant strategic advantage over a prospective foe.[44] Its primary benefit over other weapons of destruction is that it does not come within the accepted international definition of aggression. Modern geopolitics has yet to tackle the complicated challenge of controlling information weapons, which throws human life into question. New information technologies, if regarded as weapons, can be a total tragedy for humanity since, as a political tool, information warfare implies the survival of one society at the expense of the annihilation of another. Using psychological and informational warfare in the information domain is still an issue. Anarchy now rules the information space, whereas, in traditional spaces, land, water, and air, the limits and standards of civilised behaviour have long been established by international agreements and documents and are, at least in part, governed by the UN Security Council (though, as numerous examples from the 1990s and 2000s demonstrate, this control is ineffective).

Most contemporary studies in journalism, media, and communication still need to critically assess how news media aid in producing and disseminating propaganda. Even though the news media is part of the state-corporate relationship, propaganda is rarely used in scholarly treatises. Furthermore, few scholars have attempted to provide a systematic knowledge of the many propaganda techniques employed in liberal democracies. Closing this research gap is a pressing issue for future scientific investigations and a topic for general public discussion.

## CONCLUSION

The media market has grown into a crucial actor in today's geopolitical landscape, with the ability to shape social ties, correct social discourse, and ethnic and cultural identity. Today, we see "broadcasting power in the information age".[42] One example is how Al Jazeera Network aided Qatar's rise from a microstate to a significant geopolitical power. Just fifteen years ago, Qatar was on the point of becoming an Iranian or Saudi colony. Today, it plays an important role in the region's continuing religious and political conflicts. Thus, the role of the media and the media market in contemporary geopolitical landscape at national, regional, and global levels is huge, and conflictogenic potential of cultural and ethnic identity construction and presentation in contemporary media dynamics is evidently significant, contrinuting to latent and explicit internal nation-state and geopolitical turmoils, which in turn often transform to hostilities.

## REFERENCES

1. Bloch A, Solomos J. Race and ethnicity in the 21st century. Palgrave Macmillan; 2009. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-07924-4

2. Arapoglou E, Kalogeras Y, Niman J. Racial and ethnic identities in the media. Palgrave Macmillan; 2016. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56834-2

3. Mann M. Cultural interaction and the development of ethnic identity: External elements in the construction and demise of ethnicity. In Proceedings of Athens Institute for Education and Research, 14th Annual International Conference on International Studies; 2016. Available in: http://surl.li/neiopv

4. Taras Ya, Yaremchuk V. "In the footsteps of long-ago Africa" an unknown manuscript of Yuriy Shumovsky. East European Historical Bulletin. 2023;29:22–34.

5. Curran J, Seaton J. Power without responsibility: Press, broadcasting and the Internet in Britain. Routledge; 2018. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351212298-12

6. Fandy M. Civil war of words: Media and politics in the Arab world; 2007. Praeger. https://doi.org/10.5040/9798400605048

7. Taras Ya, Yaremchuk V. The lost descendants of the "People of God" in West Africa (to the 115th anniversary of the birth of Yuriy Shumovsky). Orientalism. 2023;92:269–294. https://doi.org/10.15407/skhodoznavstvo2023.92.269

8. Schmitt O. When are strategic narratives effective? The shaping of political discourse through the interaction between political myths and strategic narratives. Contemporary Security Policy. 2018;39(4):487–511. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2018.1448925

9. Taras Ya, Yaremchuk V. The winter cycle of holidays of the calendar rituals of Ukrainians in the ethnographic and theological studies of Yury Shumovskyi. Pages of History. 2023;56:209–220.

10. Buccitelli A. Race and ethnicity in digital culture: Our Changing Traditions, Impressions, and Expressions in a Mediated World. 2 vol. Praeger; 2017. https://doi.org/10.5040/9798216003953

11. Levo-Henniksson R. Media and ethnic identity: Hopi views on media, identity, and communication. Routledge; 2007. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203941492

12. Härpfer C, Wagner G. Neo-Kantianism and the social sciences: From Rickert to Weber. In: New Approaches to Neo-Kantianism. (pp. 171–185). Cambridge University Press; 2015. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139506717.009

13. Sprinzak E. Weber's Thesis as an Historical Explanation. History and Theory. 1972;11(3):294–320. https://doi.org/10.2307/2504682

14. Berger PL, Luckmann T. The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge. Anchor Books; 1966.

15. Martinelli M. Georg Simmel's life and form. Routledge; 2018. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315163802-4

16. Maxwell A. Primordialism for Scholars Who Ought to Know Better: Anthony D. Smith's Critique of Modernization Theory. Nationalities Papers. 2020;48(5):1-17. https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2019.93

17. Shytyk L, Akimova A. Ways of transferring the internal speech of characters: Psycholinguistic projection. Psycholinguistics. 2020;27(2):361–384. https://doi.org/10.31470/2309-1797-2020-27-2-361-384

18. Cottle S. Ethnic minorities and the media: Changing cultural boundaries. Open University Press; 2000.

19. Behm-Morawitz E. Media use and the development of racial and ethnic identities. In Bulck, J. (Ed.), The International Encyclopedia of Media Psychology. Wiley-Blackwell; 2020. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119011071.iemp0083

20. Mykhalchuk N, Levchuk P, Ivashkevych E, Nabochuk A. Dynamic models of multilingualism on the territory of Western Ukraine. Psycholinguistics. 2023;33(2):114–144. https://doi.org/10.31470/2309-1797-2023-33-2-114-144

21. Yang J, Rojas H, Wojcieszak M, Aalberg T, Coen S, Curran J, … Tiffen R. Why are "others" so polarised? Perceived political polarisation and media use in 10 countries. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication. 2016;21(5):349–367. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcc4.12166

22. Kamalipour Y, Snow N, Bagdikian B. War, media, and propaganda: A global perspective. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; 2004.

23. Black J. Rethinking geopolitics. Indiana University Press; 2024. https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.13167864

24. Zahoor M, Sadiq N, Media and armed conflicts: An overview. NUST Journal of International Peace and Stability. 2021;4(1):70-80. https://doi.org/10.37540/njips.v4i1.80

25. Zollmann F. Bringing propaganda back into news media studies. Critical Sociology. 2019;45(3):329–345. https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920517731134

26. Mikail EH, Aytekin CE. The communicatıons and internet revolution in international relations. Open Journal of Political Science. 2016;6:345–350. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2016.64031

27. Disinformation that kills: The expanding battlefield of digital warfare. Research Briefs, CBInsights. October 21, 2020. https://www.cbinsights.com/research/future-of-information-warfare/

28. Mishra D. Changing dimensions of information warfare. Vivekananda International Foundation. January 27, 2022. Available in: https://www.vifindia.org/article/2022/january/27/changing-dimensions-of-information-warfare

29. Seib Ph. Information at war: Journalism, disinformation, and modern warfare. Polity; 2021.

30. Henriksson A. Propaganda unmasked: Analysing tactics in modern political warfare: Political and economic warfare, propaganda tactics, covert operations, disinformation campaigns, proxy wars, and media manipulation. GRIN Verlag; 2023.

31. Deutsch K. External Involvement in Internal War. In H. Eckstein, ed, Internal War, Problems and Approaches; 1964. New York, NY: Free Press of Glencoe.

32. Seethaler J, Karmasin M, Melischek G, Wohlert R. Selling war: The role of the mass media in hostile conflicts from World War I to the "War on Terror"; 2013. Intellect.

33. Kurtis G. The ethnic conflicts and mass media. Journal of Liberty and International Affairs. 2018;4(1): 58-74.

34. Tourmani R. The role of Facebook in the Syrian uprising. Southern Illinois University; 2016.

35. Gibson S, Lando A. (Eds.). Impact of communication and the media on ethnic conflict. Information Science Reference; 2015. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-9728-7

36. Troszyński M, El-Ghamari M. A great divide: Polish media discourse on migration, 2015–2018. Humanities and Social Sciences Communications. 2022;9:27. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-021-01027-x

37. Moisi D. The geopolitics of emotion: How cultures of fear, humiliation, and hope are reshaping the world. Anchor; 2009.

38. Robinson P. Media empowerment vs. strategies of control: Theorising news media and war in the 21st century. Neue Folge. 2014;61(4):461–479. https://doi.org/10.5771/0044-3360-2014-4-461

39. Robinson P. War and media since 9/11. European Journal of Communication. 2019;34(5):557–563. https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323119875251

40. Kurum B. The role of media in shaping political and socio-economic narratives. GRIN Verlag; 2007.

41. Wachanga N. Cultural identity and new communication technologies: Political, ethnic and ideological implications. Information Science Reference; 2011. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-60960-591-9

42. Powers Sh. The geopolitics of the news: The case of the Al Jazeera Network (PhD thesis). University of Southern California; 2009.

43. Fromm E. The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, inc; 1973. http://surl.li/yxuive

44. Chadwick A. The hybrid media system: Politics and power. Oxford University Press; 2013. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199759477.001.0001

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

## AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

*Conceptualization:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Data curation:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Formal analysis:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Research:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Methodology:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Project management:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Resources:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Software:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Supervision*: Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Validation:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Display:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Drafting-original draft:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.
*Writing:* Volodymyr Diakiv, Oleksii Koval, Inesh Kdyrova, Iryna Voitenko.