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**LATVIAN-UKRAINIAN COMMUNICATIVE TIES IN THE  
CONTEXT OF INFORMATIZATION AND  
DIGITALIZATION OF SOCIETIES  
(1991-2020)**

**УКРАЇНСЬКО-ЛАТВІЙСЬКІ КОМУНІКАТИВНІ  
ЗВ'ЯЗКИ В УМОВАХ ІНФОРМАТИЗАЦІЇ ТА  
ЦИФРОВІЗАЦІЇ СУСПІЛЬСТВ  
(1991-2020 РР.)**

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ЦИФРОВИЗАЦИИ ОБЩЕСТВ (1991-2020 ГГ.)**

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## **АНОТАЦІЯ**

*У статті розкриваються основні види та типи українсько-латвійських комунікативних зв'язків, які сформувалися між Україною та Латвією впродовж довготривалого періоду (1991-2020 рр.). Зважаючи на слабку дослідженість зазначеної наукової теми у вітчизняній історичній науці, автор статті подає основний понятійно-категоріальний апарат, зокрема намагається сформуванати власне розуміння таких понять як: інформатизація, комунікація та комунікативні зв'язки в сучасних умовах глобалізованого світу. Значна увага також приділена типологізації рівнів комунікативних зв'язків, які сформувалися між Латвією та Україною.*

*Розкриваючи українсько-латвійські комунікативні зв'язки, робиться акцент на особливому місці та ролі спільної історичної пам'яті в розвитку комунікативних зв'язків між обома народами. Саме ця пам'ять не лише укріплює міждержавну та міжнародну комунікацію, а й допомагає обом народам позбутися залишків радянського тоталітарного минулого. Поряд з історичною пам'яттю в статті досліджуються три основні рівні міждержавної комунікації Латвії та України. Зокрема, першим є офіційний загальнодержавний дипломатичний рівень, представники якого фактично формують зовнішню політику держав; рівень громадський та рівень комунікації у сфері масмедіа.*

*В статті також наголошується на визначальному впливі російської збройної агресії щодо України та формування позитивного іміджу української держави в очах широкого загалу латвійської громадськості. У цей момент прослідковується значна активізація комунікації між народами обох держав на громадському рівні. Крім того, в статті наводиться приклад цілого ряду форм та методів, які сприяють укріпленню дружніх зв'язків між українським та латвійським народами. Також вказується і на цілий ряд проблем, існуючих в комунікаціях між обома державами, до вирішення яких подаються власні авторські пропозиції.*

**Ключові слова:** Латвія, Україна, комунікативні зв'язки, інформатизація, російська збройна агресія, історична пам'ять, громадянське суспільство.

**Relevance of the topic (rationale).** At present, informatization and development of global communications are the main conditions and integral elements of today's globalized world. Satellite communication, the Internet, social media, mobile telephony, telemarketing systems, electronic government etc are the foundation of modern society. Informatization and development of global communications have led to dramatic changes in all areas of life of modern societies including international relations. At present, it has been proven that use of global communications in relations between states and nations promotes strengthening and deepening of such relations which encompass not only official diplomacy but also other levels such as relations between particular social groups, political and civil organizations, mass media, individual citizens and so on. In the article, we will attempt to explore communicative ties between Latvia and Ukraine – the countries that have accumulated certain experience in such ties due to their friendly relations, and this experience now requires to be studied and considered.

**Availability of recent research on the topic.** At present, the problem of Latvian-Ukrainian communicative ties is explored insufficiently in modern historiography. As a certain reference mark in methodology, we used «Global Communication», a monograph by modern Ukrainian scientist O. Zernetska (Зернецька). In this research work, the author was the first member of national historical and political science to attempt a comprehensive study of the global communications phenomenon in the early 21st century, with emphasis on scientific consideration of such components of global communication as digitalization, the Internet, global blogosphere, social media and so on. In this article, we have used theoretical and conceptual developments of O. Zernetska's research. Specific aspects of Latvian-Ukrainian communication were covered in

research works by V. Stelmakh (Стельмах, 2018), M. Sydoruk (Сидорук, 2010) and O. Shatkov (Шатков, 2013). For instance, V. Stelmakh paid attention to Latvian experience that Ukraine needs to use on the way to European integration, in her article «Baltic regional cooperation on the way towards western integration structures.» In his research on Latvia's participation in the Baltic Assembly, M. Sydoruk attempted to identify the role of mass media in Latvian-Ukrainian relations and their role in popularizing European civilization values in Ukrainian society. In the article by a Russian scientist O. Shatkov, «Participation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in Baltic States International Organization Activities in 1990-2012,» estimated the value and importance of «people's diplomacy» which is gaining a more prominent role in present-day international relations.

**In the present article, the purpose is as follows:**

- to explore main communicative ties as exemplified by modern Latvian-Ukrainian international relations;
- to identify the place and role of the concept of shared «historical memory» in formation of Latvian-Ukrainian communicative ties;
- to discover the main level of these ties;
- to identify main advantages and problems of these levels;
- to provide corresponding recommendations regarding improvement of Latvian-Ukrainian communicative ties.

**Presentation of the core material.** When revealing the place and role of communicative ties in present-day relations between Latvia and Ukraine, we consider it necessary to define the main framework of categories and concepts for our research, especially in regard to such notions as informatization and communicative ties.

The term «informatization» is primarily used to denote the multitude of interrelated organizational, legal, political, socio-economical, scientific, technological and production processes aimed at creating conditions to satisfy information needs of citizens and the society on the basis of creation, development and application of information systems, networks, resources and

information technologies based on the use of modern computing and communications technology (ЗУ).

As to the notion of communicative ties, it is identical to the notion of communication. In a more expanded form, this notion includes five fundamental factors: initiator of communication; recipient; method or means of conveyance; message; and effect (Зернецька: 47).

Discussing global communicative ties, O. Zernetska divides these ties into three levels: international, transnational and global. In his explanation of the difference between international-level communicative ties and global-level communication ties, a well-known American scientist M. Price pointed out in 2010 that when «authors use the term ‘global communication’ they mean the role of the state and the state sovereignty which are reducing more and more. Meanwhile, the term «international communication» has a shadow of meaning that suggests bilateral or multilateral relations» (Зернецька: 49). In the context of the communication problems explored in this article, we will primarily consider communications of an international level.

Latvia acts as one of the most consistent and reliable partners and allies, with which Ukraine maintains stable interstate relations in all areas of life. It should be noted that the reasons for Ukraine's active presence in Latvia's foreign policy have multiple dimensions. First and foremost, Latvia is an unconditional supporter of Ukraine's integration with the EU and NATO, and in the minds of the general public of Latvian society it has become a synonym of independence and further progressive development towards acquisition of European standards and civilization values.

As for Ukraine, its interests concerning Latvia consist in the following:

- support for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine;
- maintaining sanctions against Russia and supporting Ukraine on the background of the Russian aggression;

– studying Latvian experience in conducting important reforms concerning decentralization, combating corruption, and solving land-related issues; national policy etc (LSM).

It should be noted that an especially important role in communicative ties between Latvia and Ukraine belongs to honouring the common historical past of the two peoples and their joint struggle for independence. At present, the issue of common history shared by Ukrainian and Latvian people is mentioned by almost every Latvian politician speaking about Ukraine. It is important for us that it covers wider historical periods than only being part of the USSR.

A special place in this shared historical memory belongs to a short period (1917-1920) of joint struggle of the Latvian and Ukrainian peoples for their independence, and this is the episode that is often mentioned in Latvia's political circles not only due to establishment of bilateral diplomatic contacts between the governments in exile of both states, but also because of Latvian communities in Ukraine, mostly residing in Kharkiv during World War I and publishing Latvian newspapers. A bright page of the common Latvian-Ukrainian past is the historical memory of approximately 15,000 Latvians serving in the army of Ukrainian people's republic (Delfi.lv).

Besides, in spite of the actual Soviet occupation, Latvian and Ukrainian diasporas and governments worked to ensure that the countries currently belonging to the Western coalition would never admit legitimacy of the Soviet rule over their land. It is of special relevance today, in the circumstances of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, because both in present and in the past the policy of non-recognition adopted by the West is considered to be the most powerful instrument for our country in regaining control over the occupied territories of the Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk Regions in the future (Tvnet.lv).

Alongside with that, the shared history of the Soviet period makes both Latvia and Ukraine face a series of similar problems such as decommunization. The celebration of 9 May as the end of

the «Great Patriotic War» still remains a popular event for a certain part of the Latvian population which indicates that perception of a certain version of history in Latvia is determined by people's national identity rather than the narrative officially supported by the state. The process of decommunization that Latvia started on 24 August 1991 by pulling down the monument of Lenin near the present-day Government building reached Ukraine only in 2014 (Diena.lv).

Overcoming the Communist past shared by both countries is also one of the problems faced by Latvian and Ukrainian societies, and the two states can exchange their experience in the course of bilateral communication. For example, Ukraine's decision to open KGB archives in 2016 aroused interest in Latvia because in this Baltic country the issue of opening archives to public was a certain stumbling stone for a long time which prevented achieving social consensus in this field, and politicization of this issue during the parliamentary elections in 2018 only made the situation tenser, playing into the hands of pro-Russian political forces (Tvnet.lv).

In its turn, Latvia had made attempts to consolidate the ethnically divided society by solving the problem of common memory in legislature long before Ukraine took similar steps. For example, the official Latvian narrative considers the notion «a state of two communities» to be a different way of interpreting its history and a direct threat to Latvian sovereignty. The document entitled «Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy» (Яніс Вінґріс...) took effect in 2011. Main vectors of the policy implemented by government agencies (mostly Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture) are related to expansion of the Latvian language and Latvian cultural space as well as to popularizing the understanding of history through education and integration-oriented projects along with public celebration of officially recognized dates such as 4 May (Independence Restoration Day), 11 November (Latvian Freedom Fighters' Remembrance Day), and 18 November (Proclamation Day of the Republic of Latvia).

To tell the truth, low public confidence in the government both in Latvia and Ukraine may prevent official attempts at national consolidation. In Latvia, one can find different examples of treating old Soviet monuments. For example, the Salaspils Memorial Ensemble dedicated to victims of Nazism was built in 1967 in the former concentration camp site and became a part of Latvia's historic heritage. This heritage united various strata of Latvian society who tend to interpret the country's history differently. For example, Latvian officials arrive at the memorial on 8 May, and on May 9, the place is visited by people willing to honour the end of the Great Patriotic War. Overall, the transformation of memory space à l'Européenne, focused on the common European future rather than the past is the idea popularized by Latvian scholars (Яніс Вітгіс...).

Another important battle in Latvia's and Ukraine's struggle for memory is getting rid of the stereotypical epithet of being «ex-Soviet» or «post-Soviet». In the context of communicative ties, this is not only an internal struggle related to post-Soviet heritage, but also an external one concerning the countries' desire to be recognized as being different from the rest of ex-Soviet republics, which are believed to still remain in the sphere of Russian influence.

Therefore, Latvia and Ukraine are helping each other in the process of shaping their own identities by building effective communication in the field of preserving historical memory and overcoming the Communist past. This process is facilitated by joint cultural events as well. For example, in 2016 the National Art Museum of Ukraine and Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art (Riga) held a joint exhibition «Identity. Behind the Curtain of Uncertainty» (Diena.lv).

Talking about the levels of communicative ties formed between Latvia and Ukraine, the three main levels should be distinguished:

– the official diplomatic level, representatives of which shape foreign policies of the states and are actually responsible for these policies. This level also includes various political parties, civil

organizations, stakeholders etc who influence the general line in foreign policy of both states;

- the society level;
- the level of communication in mass media.

As to the national diplomatic level, the main institution to represent Latvia's policy concerning Ukraine in the international arena is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia led by Edgars Rinkēvičs (Vienotība, «Unity») and State Secretary Andrejs Pildegovičs who has been in office since 2011 and has repeatedly spoken in support of Ukraine's territorial integrity, promoting ideas of Euro-Atlantic integration for our country and expressing his protest against the Russian aggression in Ukraine. In addition, the Latvian embassy in Ukraine and personally the Ambassador Juris Poikāns are actively implementing Latvia's policy concerning Ukraine against the background of the Russian military aggression, and most political parties in Latvia have spoken unanimously in support of Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence (Яніс Вінгріс...).

For example, members of the coalition in Saeima (the Latvian parliament) – «Union of Greens and Farmers» (Zaļoun Zemnieku Savienība), «Unity» (Delfi.lv) and «National Alliance» (Tvnet.lv) spoke in favour of Ukraine's European ambition and demanded immediate international support. However, the largest opposition party, Saskaņa («Harmony»), which is considered the only relatively pro-Russian party in Latvia that strives to represent the Russian-speaking population as its main voters, has demonstrated a less clearly expressed position. It should be borne in mind, though, that despite being in opposition, «Harmony» was an important player to win the biggest number of seats in the parliamentary elections of 2014 and is the ruling party in Riga (Delfi.lv). However, the party's pro-Russian sentiments caused its popularity in Latvia to decrease after the Russian aggression against Ukraine began in 2014.

With the new parliamentary elections approaching in 2018, «Harmony» announced cancellation of its association agreement with Russia's ruling party «United Russia» and changed its course

to strengthening ties with the European Union, soon receiving the invitation to join the Party of European Socialists – something that «Harmony» had been trying to achieve for 11 years.

In the end, with influence from the Latvian society, «Harmony» was forced to change its political stance and claim full support of Ukraine's territorial integrity (Lāsma Grundule).

The views of this party have not influenced Latvia's official policy towards all-round support of Ukraine in foreign-policy activities, particularly in the European Union, because the influence of this political force on current and future events is compensated by opinion leaders and other politicians who see themselves as Ukraine's friends. In the present-day political circles, they include Latvian members of parliament Atis Lejins («Unity»), Rihards Kols («National Alliance»), Lolita Čigāne («Unity»), speaker of the Latvian Parliament (Saeima) Ināra Mūrniece («National Alliance»), as well as Ainars Mezulis («Union of Greens and Farmers»), head of the Parliamentary Group on Inter-Parliamentary Relations with Ukraine. Latvia's ex-president (1999-2007) Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga has also voiced her support on many occasions (Diena.lv).

The pro-Russian views of certain Latvian politicians are mostly expressed outside of Latvia, namely in the European Parliament by its Latvian members Tatjana Ždanoka and Andrejs Mamikins. In 2014, Ždanoka visited Crimea and supported results of the so-called Crimean referendum, while Mamikins suggested removing the annexation of Crimea from the agenda and resuming trade with Russia (LRSST). However, all the above mentioned political figures do not influence Latvia's foreign policy (The Baltic Times...).

For Ukraine's part, the key figures in the dialogue between Latvia and Ukraine besides the President of Ukraine in 2014-2019 Petro Poroshenko, the current President Volodymyr Zelenskyi and Ministers of Foreign Affairs also include Vasyl Khymynets, director of the first European department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, and head of the group for inter-parliamentary relations with the Republic of Latvia Oleksandr Kodola.

Refat Chubarov, chairman of the Medjlis of the Crimean Tatar People is also known in Latvia not only for his political activity in protecting interests of Crimean Tatars but also for having lived in Latvia for many years and even being a member of Riga City Council in 1989-1991. Most experts believe a serious issue in Latvian-Ukrainian communicative ties was absence of a Ukrainian ambassador in the Republic of Latvia. Although the work of acting Ukrainian Charge d'Affaires Alisa Podoliak was highly appreciated by Latvian experts and Ukrainian community in Latvia (Delfi.lv), the absence of an officially appointed ambassador prevented successful and flawless bilateral communication. However, Oleksandr Mishchenko was appointed Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Ukraine in the Republic of Latvia with the Order No.46/2019 of the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi on 27 February 2019.

Characterizing the society level of Latvian-Ukrainian communicative ties, it should be noted that the level of awareness of Ukraine in Latvian society has grown after 2014, although an average citizen of the Republic still knows little about Ukraine except for some facts connected with the Russian aggression.

Anyway, it was the Russian aggression that sparked massive support for Ukraine on the part of Latvian citizens. At present, Latvia's civil society is actively engaged in collecting humanitarian aid for Ukraine. Events in Ukraine facilitated mobilization of voluntary charities, one of the most prominent being Ukraine SOS which transferred over EUR 1 million to support Ukraine in 2014-2016 (The Eastern Direction...). In 2015, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments raised funds to support Chernihiv Military Hospital (Nacionālais...). These efforts were also supported by funding allocated from the state budget in 2014 and 2015 to purchase electric power generators and blankets, food and clothes, and to provide aid to internally displaced persons (LTV...).

The topic of war entered the Latvian cultural space. Political activity of Latvian politicians was supplemented by Ukraine-related

cultural events. Numerous films such as «The Invisible City» by Viesturs Kairish (2014) (Likumi.lv), «The Bridge from Latvia to Donbass: How We Help Ukraine» by Imants Liepiņš (2015) (Nacionālais), «The Close War» by Atis Klimovičs, Atis Lesinš (2015) (LTV...) and «Volunteers» by Janis Vingris (2016) (Шатков), are followed by books such as «Ukraine. Life, Death and the Inner Revolution - an Eyewitness Account» by Imants Liepiņš (2015) (Diena.lv) and the recent analysis of Ukrainian events by Alvis Marcinkevics (2017) (Fotogrāfijas...).

As an example of cultural protest, film director Alvis Hermanis and New Riga Theatre cancelled a series of planned performances and other cultural projects in Russian in 2014, while the decision of Latvian pop group Brainstorm to take part in the Russian rock festival Nashestvie («Invasion») in 2015 sparked intense arguments in Latvia's society (Tvnet.lv).

Activity of Ukrainian civil organizations in Latvia has also become more noticeable due to such steps as translation of Sergiy Loyko's book «The Airport» (2017) (Військовий роман...) and organization of the exhibition «Ukraine. War and Peace» by Ksenia Fetisova in the National Library of Latvia (Prāta...). Besides, first Days of Ukrainian Culture in Riga were organized in October 2017 (Стельмах).

It should be noted that cancelation of an international music festival «New Wave» in Jurmala and four other cultural events in 2015 as a counter-sanction move on the part of Russia had also had an effect on Ukraine's presence in Latvia.

The matter is that the festival was held in Dzintari concert hall in Jurmala, a sea resort popular with Russian elite and still an attractive tourist destination for Russians. In spite of the apprehension concerning a decrease in budget revenues of Latvia's fifth largest city, Jurmala was able to re-orientate to other sources of income. Immediately after announcing cancellation of the festival the inflow of tourists from Russia dropped by 30%, but it was hardly surprising for Latvians with consideration of the reducing purchasing power of the Russian rouble. With all that, Russian

tourists still constitute the second largest group of people visiting Latvia. Beginning with 2015, their number began to increase again (Diena.lv) in spite of the festival occupying only a certain niche in Latvian cultural space (and it is not that of an exquisite event, because most Latvian-speaking people have never identified themselves with its program), although the cancellation is perceived as a loss only by minor groups of the population.

At the same time, the market share was not vacant for long, and it was soon occupied by Russian stars with their solo concerts (for example, Denis Matsuev, Grigory Leps, Stas Mikhailov), new festivals such as «Rendez-vous» by Laima Vaikule and other Western musicians (Positivus, Sunset Festival)<sup>76</sup>. In 2016, Ukrainian studio «Kvartal 95» also performed in Jurmala trying to win over the Latvian audience and replace the «New Wave» with the festival «Made in Ukraine». In spite of a promising idea and quite successful organization, the festival was never continued in 2017, except for a few occasional concerts (Diena.lv).

The next level in Latvian-Ukrainian communicative ties is that of mass media. This level is arguably one of the most important as mass media form the information space and therefore affect directly the public opinion of the society. In this connection, it should be noted that despite its relatively small population the Latvian society is a multi-ethnic one, with the largest minority group being Russians and 11.6% of them classified as non-citizens. Although Russian-speaking part of the population is an important community in Latvia, the mere fact of speaking Russian does not make a person pro-Russian automatically, as 37.2% of Latvians use Russian as their primary language and 43.7% as their secondary one. It should also be noted that in February 2012, during the constitutional referendum on Russian as the second official language 74.8% of the population voted against it (Diena.lv), and opinion leaders of Russian origin such as Mikhail Gruzdev campaigned for Latvian as the only official language.

With this situation in mind, there are two main media spaces in modern Latvian society – the Latvian and the Russian – with the

latter being more prone to reproducing Russian propaganda and misleading information. The way how various Latvian mass media describe the situation in Ukraine has become a kind of a litmus test for one's political views. In particular, a popular saying in today's Latvia is «Tell me what newspapers you read and I'll know your attitude to Ukraine».

Unlike the Russian media space, the Latvian-speaking space is more resistant to foreign narratives which concern threats to state security (Fotogrāfijas...). That is why coverage of events related to Ukraine complies with professional standards of journalism, despite occasional deviations in Russian-language media. It should be noted that the interest of journalists to Ukraine and the desire to know more about our country increased after November 2013 and maintained this tendency throughout 2014 and 2015 when printed media (Latvijas vīze) and online media (Lsm and Delfi) published exclusive materials about the situation in Ukraine. The positions of Latvijas Televīzija, Delfi and Tvnet are mostly based on Western media sphere with the exception of Interfax and TASS), in contrast with the Russian-speaking PBK (First Baltic Channel) which also uses NEWS ru.com and Korrespondent as primary sources of information about Ukraine (Diena.lv).

It should be noted that vulnerability of public opinion in Latvia to Russian disinformation, large volumes of consumption (with varied regularity) of Russian media content that covers 63% of Latvia's population and the threats arising from these facts are topics for active discussion. Therefore, the issue of resilience of Latvian information space to Russian propaganda (including materials related to Ukraine) are still the focus of attention for experts and decision-makers (Diena.lv).

However, the popularity of Russian mass media in Latvia should not be overestimated, in spite of the above mentioned facts. It is important to note that RBK remains the only media resource rigorously competing with Latvian and foreign mass media in Latvia, but it is mostly chosen for entertainment, i.e. to watch films and TV series. Also, only 32% of the population do prefer Russian media resources to Latvian.

In addition, certain actions are taken by the official organizations. To counter Russian propaganda, the StratCom – NATO Strategic Communications Centre was founded in Riga in January 2014. Latvian Ministry of Defence also introduced special courses in national security and media literacy for secondary schools.

As to Ukraine, it has little opportunity to influence Latvian information space but we can share best practices in countering Russian propaganda (for example, the Stopfake initiative). Alongside with that, Ukraine should cooperate with NATO Strategic Communications Centre within the framework of the Ukraine – NATO platform for countering hybrid warfare.

**Conclusions and proposals.** In the present-day context of informatization, communicative ties encompassing various levels and fields of activity of both states are developing very actively between Latvia and Ukraine.

Such important fields of interstate communication include, in the first place, the propaganda of common historical ties between Latvia and Ukraine, shared historical memory and the task to overcome the remnants of the totalitarian Soviet past. Historical connections with Ukraine are also very important for building national identity of Latvians. Therefore, based on the analysis of present-day communications, we believe that Ukrainian partners (diplomats, members of parliament etc) should accentuate the equivalence of these ties for Ukraine in their communication with their Latvian colleagues, as such ties are a matter of national pride inspired by the history of state-building of both countries. In this connection, the celebration of one hundred years of diplomatic relations between Latvia and Ukraine in 2018 became an ideal pretext for mutual popularization of both countries among their population as well as for continued and deepened mutual support of the two states.

At the moment, Ukraine's task is to prove to Latvians that «Slavic» does not have to be «Russian» and boring, but can also be Ukrainian, modern and self-sufficient.

Along with historical memory, we distinguish three levels of communicative ties, in particular:

- the official diplomatic level, representatives of which actually shape foreign policies of the states. Along state institutions, we include here various activities by political parties, civil organizations, stakeholders etc who influence the general line in foreign policy of both states;
- the society level;
- the level of communication in mass media.

Based on the analysis of communicative ties at these levels, we can suggest a series of proposals to improve these ties.

1. Ukraine should continue borrowing Latvia's experience in many areas (combating corruption, agriculture, education, minority policies, municipal development, interaction with diaspora etc) and promote Latvian experience in Ukraine.

2. With the purpose of activating Latvian-Ukrainian communications at the level of civil societies in both states, we suggest that the government of Ukraine and interested non-governmental organizations should hold a conference or a series of workshops in Kyiv to study «Latvia's lessons in nation-building for Ukraine.»

3. Considering the admiration for Ukraine's civil society observed throughout various groups of Latvian public, it would be worthwhile to hold a Latvian-Ukrainian forum of civil society in Riga where leading Ukrainian and Latvian civil society organizations could exchange experience.

4. Reforms in such areas as war on corruption, court system and deregulation will help Ukraine not only strengthen its bilateral relations with Latvia but also to supply Latvia with effective arguments in favour of Ukraine's membership in the European Union and NATO. If the reforms fail, it will work against Ukraine in both directions.

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The article reveals main kinds and types of Latvian-Ukrainian communicative ties that have formed between Latvia and Ukraine over a long period of time (1991-2020). Taking into consideration the insufficient development of this research topic in national historical studies, the author presents the main framework of categories and concepts, and attempts to formulate her own understanding of such notions as informatization, communication and communicative ties in the modern context of the globalized world. Considerable attention is also given to typologization of levels in communicative ties that have been formed between Latvia and Ukraine.*

*Revealing Latvian-Ukrainian communicative ties, emphasis is laid on the special place and role of shared historical memory in the development of communicative ties between the two peoples. It is this memory that not only strengthens interstate and international communication but also helps both peoples to dispose of the remains of the Soviet totalitarian past. Along with historical memory, the article explores three main levels in interstate communication between Latvia and Ukraine. In particular, the first one is the official diplomatic level, representatives of which actually shape foreign policies of the states; the two other levels are the society level and the level of communication in mass media.*

*The article also emphasizes the determining influence caused by the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and by formation of Ukraine's positive image for the general public of Latvian society. Currently, there is a considerable increase in communication activities between the peoples of the two states at the level of society. In addition, the article cites numerous examples of forms and methods that facilitate strengthening of friendly ties between Latvian and Ukrainian peoples. The article also indicates quite a number of problems that exist in communications between the two states, with possible solutions to these issues as suggested by the author.*

**Keywords:** *Latvia, Ukraine, communicative ties, informatization, Russian military aggression, historical memory, civil society.*

## **АННОТАЦІЯ**

*В статье раскрываются основные виды и типы украинско-латвийских коммуникативных связей, которые сформировались между Украиной и Латвией в течение длительного периода (1991-2020 гг.). Учитывая слабую исследованность указанной научной темы в отечественной исторической науке, автор статьи подает основной понятийно-категориальный аппарат, в частности пытается сформировать собственное понимание таких понятий как информатизация, коммуникация и коммуникативные связи в современных условиях глобализирующегося мира. Значительное внимание также уделено типологизации уровней коммуникативных связей, которые сформировались между Латвией и Украиной.*

*Раскрывая украинско-латышские коммуникативные связи, автор статьи делает акцент на особом месте и роли общей исторической памяти в развитии коммуникативных связей между двумя народами. Именно эта память не только укрепляет межгосударственную и международную коммуникацию, но и помогает обоим народам избавиться от остатков советского тоталитарного прошлого. Вместе с исторической памятью в статье исследуются три основных уровня межгосударственной коммуникации Латвии и Украины. В частности, первым является официальный общегосударственный дипломатический уровень, представители которого фактически формируют внешнюю политику государств; уровень общественный и уровень коммуникации в масс-медиа.*

*В статье также отмечается определяющее влияние российской вооруженной агрессии в отношении Украины и формирования положительного имиджа государства Украина*

*в глазах широкой общественности латвийской общественности. В этот момент прослеживается значительная активизация коммуникации между народами обоих государств на общественном уровне. Кроме того, в статье приводятся примеры целого ряда форм и методов, способствующих вкраплениями дружественных связей между украинским и латвийскими народами. Вместе с этим, в статье указывается и на ряд существующих в коммуникациях между двумя государствами проблем, и вместе с выводами автор предоставляет свои собственные предложения по решению этих проблем.*

**Ключевые слова:** Латвия, Украина, коммуникативные связи, информатизация, российская вооруженная агрессия, историческая память, гражданское общество.