

<https://doi.org/10.31861/mediaforum.2025.17.154-164>

УДК: 327(477:8):[316.77:005.21

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COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF UKRAINE REGARDING THE COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (LAC)

The article examines Ukraine's communication strategy for Latin American countries and Caribbean, stages of planning and implementation. It analyzes Ukraine's strategic vision in developing new pathways of interaction with continents that have long remained outside the focus of Ukrainian diplomacy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study assesses Ukraine's communication capacity in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region, which has enabled the identification of new approaches and methods to counter Russian propaganda in the Spanish-language media space.

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— *The communication capacity of Ukraine and the projects currently being implemented in countering Russian propaganda in the Spanish-language media space are considered. The article highlights the main directions of the communication strategy and multilateral engagement, as well as its strategic and communicative objectives. Economic and political cooperation, security collaboration, ecological and humanitarian dimensions are identified as priorities in the implementation of the strategy. The presence of Ukrainian embassies and the diaspora with media-related networks is emphasized as a decisive factor for communication efforts in the region. The realization of the strategy is made possible through the development of Ukrainian narratives, the support of public and cultural diplomacy, and the establishment of new partnerships in Latin America.*

Keywords: strategy, communication, Latin America, Caribbean, planning, public diplomacy, foreign policy, international relations.

Комунікаційна стратегія України щодо країн Латинської Америки та Карибського басейну (ЛАКБ): планування та реалізація

В статті розглядається комунікаційна стратегія України щодо країн Латинської Америки, етапи планування та реалізації. Здій-

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снено аналіз та пошук стратегічного бачення України нових шляхів взаємодії з іншими континентами світу, які тривалий час не були в центрі уваги української дипломатії та МЗС. Здійснено аналіз комунікаційної спроможності України у регіоні ЛАКБ, що дозволило виробити нові шляхи та методи боротьби з російською пропагандою в іспаномовному медійному просторі. Розглянута комунікаційна спроможність України та проекти, які реалізуються зараз у протидії російській пропаганді в іспаномовному медійному просторі. Виокремлено основні напрямки комунікаційної стратегії та багатосторонньої взаємодії, основні стратегічні та комунікаційні цілі. Економічний та політичний напрямки, безпекова співпраця, екологічний та гуманітарні напрямки є пріоритетними у реалізації стратегії. Існування посольств та української діаспори з зв'язками у медіасфері є вирішальним фактором для комунікаційних зусиль в досліджуваному регіоні.. Саме, через формування українських наративів, підтримку публічної та культурної дипломатії в регіоні та налагодження нових зв'язків можлива реалізація комунікаційної стратегії.

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Ключові слова: стратегія, комунікація, Латинська Америка, Карибський басейн, планування, публічна дипломатія, зовнішня політика, міжнародні відносини.

Formulation of the Scientific Problem. Russia's aggression and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, transformed the international agenda and the global security discourse. For Ukraine, it became necessary to plan and implement new channels of communication that would prove useful in countering the aggressor in even the most remote corners of the world. Latin American and Caribbean countries have long remained among the most receptive and adaptable audiences for Russian propaganda. The Spanish-language information space has for years been dominated by Russian narratives that discredit Ukraine's image on the international stage, question its sovereignty and independence, and promote Moscow's perspective on the war in Ukraine. This situation did not emerge by chance: in Ukraine's foreign policy strategy, Latin America has historically not received sufficient attention. Only after the full-scale invasion did an understanding arise of the need to strengthen communication at all levels with Latin American countries. With limited support, neutrality on the part of many Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) states, and condemnations of the aggressor, Ukraine began to develop a new foreign policy

strategy, and subsequently, a communication strategy under wartime conditions. The response of Latin American countries to Russian aggression varied: some - such as Chile, Uruguay, and Guatemala - expressed support for Ukraine; most declared neutrality; while Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua, Russia's strategic partners in the region, supported the aggressor.

Analysis of Recent Research and Publications. Over the past decade, Ukraine has developed its own scholarly school of Latin American studies. At Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, the Center for Latin American and Iberian Studies "Casa Iberoamericana" was established under the leadership of Ukrainian scholar N. Shevchenko. Leading experts of the "Ukrainian Prism" Foreign Policy Council - such as N. Shevchenko, A. Kosenko-Solohub, and I. Fechko (2024) - have produced in-depth and substantial research on disinformation and the influence of Russian propaganda in Latin America.

156 — Another noteworthy think tank is ADASTRA, which conducts comprehensive analyses of global trends and provides recommendations for Ukraine's domestic and foreign policy. Within its activities, a dedicated "Latin American Studies" program has been launched with the aim of advancing, developing, and strengthening Ukraine's relations with Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries. Among the center's researchers, valuable contributions have been made by O. Otkydach (2022), A. Sakharova (2022), and others.

A significant contribution to the study of disinformation has been made by the Odesa Center for Disinformation Study, led by Professor O.I. Brusylovskaya (2024). The center specializes in examining Russian disinformation globally, while K. Vakarchuk (2024) has emerged as a leading expert on Latin America within center's framework. Analytical works of the center have illuminated the impact of Russian propaganda in Cuba and highlighted the positions of Russia's strategic partners in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Finally, the work of Ukrainian scholar T. Bohdanova (2025) on the concept of "active non-alignment" in Latin America's foreign policy discourse illustrates the role of those countries that either support Ukraine or maintain neutrality in its struggle against Russian aggression.

The purpose of this article is to analyze and identify new ways of interaction and the implementation of Ukraine's communication strategy toward the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

Methodological Foundations of the Study. The article employs gen-

eral scientific research methods such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, and generalization. The most effective for addressing the objectives of this study proved to be the interdisciplinary theoretical and methodological approach of discourse analysis, understood as a specific mode of communication and perception of a given aspect. The use of this method made it possible to conduct a narrative analysis, which is applied when planning audience influence within the framework of strategic communication. After all, a communication strategy constitutes a targeted plan of action aimed at delivering truthful information to a specific audience in order to achieve a change of opinion, among other outcomes. Discourse analysis allows researchers to utilize existing public narratives in order to shape a new discourse and strategy.

Presentation of the Main Material. In Latin American countries, the overall quality of media products has remained relatively low. This is largely due to long-standing traditions of neutrality and non-intervention in conflicts and wars around the world, as well as a stronger focus on internal issues rather than external ones. As of 2025, Ukraine has established diplomatic relations with 17 states of the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. Six Ukrainian embassies are currently operating in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Cuba, and Chile. In addition, Ukraine maintains diplomatic representation in 11 countries: Uruguay, El Salvador, Ecuador, Paraguay, Panama, Costa Rica, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Guatemala, and Belize. This year, plans have been announced to open new embassies in the region, including in Uruguay, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Ecuador. In July of the current year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) announced a new structural reform - the creation of a Department of Latin America and the Caribbean, separated from the existing Directorate for the United States and Canada. This is an important step in reforming the MFA and demonstrates the growing role of this region in Ukraine's foreign policy strategy.

For the first time in Ukraine's history, the MFA developed the Strategy for the Development of Relations between Ukraine and Latin America and the Caribbean in 2024, designed as a five-year framework. According to Foreign Minister Kuleba, "The Strategy is a strategic planning document aimed at elevating political, trade, economic, cultural, humanitarian, and other areas of cooperation to a new qualitative level. It defines the main directions of Ukraine's activities in Latin America and the Caribbean under the conditions of resisting Russian aggression, while ensuring support

for restoring a just peace in our country and for post-war reconstruction” (MZS rozroblylo stratehiu rozvytku..., 2024).

The Strategy sets out the following objectives for relations between Ukraine and LAC states: securing regional support for Ukraine in countering Russian aggression, de-occupation of temporarily occupied territories, and restoration of sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders; ensuring LAC participation in the implementation of President Volodymyr Zelensky's Peace Formula; assisting Ukrainian exporters in accessing LAC markets; increasing trade and investment volumes; supporting Ukrainian communities in LAC countries in meeting their cultural and linguistic needs; strengthening Ukraine's informational presence and countering Russian propaganda; and promoting Ukrainian culture (Komunikatsiina stratehiia..., 2024).

158 — In general, communication strategies are created to plan and manage interaction with an audience in order to transmit information effectively, purposefully, and persuasively. They serve to inform, persuade, attract attention, build trust, and maintain reputation - factors that contribute to achieving concrete objectives in business, politics, interpersonal communication, or other spheres (Balabanov, Konstantyova, Suleimanov, 2024).

The next important step was the creation of Ukraine's Communication Strategy with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, which provides for the promotion of pro-Ukrainian narratives filled with Ukrainian content, Ukrainian history, and culture. Thanks to such a communication instrument, it becomes possible to convey the truth about the cultural and mental characteristics of Ukrainians (Komunikatsiina stratehiia..., 2024).

An important element in establishing communication ties is the development and support of cultural diplomacy in the region. It has been proven that only common themes that unite can be implemented in LAC. In shaping common themes, historical issues of the colonial past, issues of peace and ecocide, the emancipation of indigenous peoples, the resistance of the Ukrainian people, etc., can be actualized. These topics arouse interest and response from the Latin American audience, therefore they should be developed even within the limited opportunities that Ukraine has in a state of war. The deployment of certain communication activities in the region should change the opinion of the population, which is nourished by Russian disinformation about Ukraine.

The Strategy demonstrates a differentiated approach to the countries of the region with priority given to the largest economies (Brazil, Mexico, Argentina). Countries with active political contacts (Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, Paraguay). Countries with existing diplomatic representations of Ukraine (Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and Chile), which influence communication opportunities in these countries. States with a significant Ukrainian diaspora and countries that have shown a certain level of support for Ukraine on the international stage (Balabanov, Konstanty-tova, Suleimanov, 2024).

Consumers of Russian Spanish-language media often choose content that is visually of high quality, but in most cases it is disinformation. The Spanish-language edition of Russia Today, a Russian state media outlet, and its cloned websites promote Russian narratives and fake news, spreading false information about Russia's war in Ukraine, justifying Russian military attacks on civilian targets in Ukraine. Sputnik spreads Russian disinformation, anti-Western and anti-European narratives, justifies Russia's war in Ukraine, shaping anti-Western and anti-American narratives in most Latin American countries. RT and Sputnik have a huge audience on such social networks as Facebook and Twitter, publishing comments by Russian officials or their allies, broadcasting a version favorable to Russia (Vyhodianska, 2024).

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As Ukrainian researcher O. Otkydach notes, due to geographical remoteness and the lack of systematic informational and educational work on the Ukrainian side, Latin American politicians may often express such views simply out of a banal lack of awareness of the situation in Eastern Europe and its history (Otkydach, 2024).

In order to be able to convey the truth, Ukraine must make efforts to ensure that Spanish-language sources do not disseminate Russian propaganda but instead join Ukrainian projects or refer to Ukrainian publications from official sources. It should be noted that perhaps the main strategic informational role is played by the Ukrainian embassies in the region. They organize meetings and disseminate information on social networks. The same task could be performed by Ukrainian experts or analytical centers; however, at present, there are few Ukrainian or local experts who specifically focus on Eastern Europe and reside in Latin American countries. In contrast, the Ukrainian diaspora can become a bridge between the Ukrainian and Latin American information spaces, as they understand both the Ukrainian and the local context. It is well known that a large Ukrainian

community lives in Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, and other countries. Most often, the diaspora organizes itself through social networks. For example, groups such as *Ucrainianos en Argentina* (Ukrainians in Argentina), *Ucrania en México* (Ukraine in Mexico), *Ucrainianos en Colombia* (Ukrainians in Colombia), etc., although small in number, are quite active. The involvement of the local diaspora can take place through cooperation with embassies (Sakharova, 2024).

160 — The communication strategy outlines important points concerning ensuring the support of Ukraine by the countries of the region in countering Russian aggression, the de-occupation of temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, and the restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders; ensuring the participation of LAC countries in the implementation of the Peace Formula; assisting Ukrainian exporters in entering LAC markets; increasing trade and investment volumes; supporting Ukrainian communities in LAC countries in fulfilling their national, cultural, and linguistic needs; strengthening Ukraine's informational presence and combating Russian propaganda; and promoting Ukrainian culture. In essence, the communication strategy is a roadmap that protects the country's interests beyond its borders. For the strategy to work, cooperation with Ukrainian communities in the region is needed in order to form a positive image of Ukraine and establish communication in the region. At present, it is known that 139 Russian channels operate in the region and are familiar with techniques of disseminating false information about Ukraine (Vakarchuk, 2024).

The new communication strategy, designed for three years, is intended to change public opinion in Latin American countries and deepen cooperation with the region. The formation of a positive image of Ukraine should contribute to the development of multilateral relations as well as the strengthening of economic and political ties.

For Ukraine, it is extremely important to counter the narratives disseminated by Kremlin propaganda, such as "this is not your war," that the main blame for the outbreak of the war lies with the United States and NATO, the complete absence of the terms "war" and "invasion," and instead the traditional "special military operation," "denazification," and "demilitarization." Many messages are aimed at discrediting the Ukrainian army and the Armed Forces of Ukraine, for example: "Russia guarantees compliance with the ceasefire despite Ukrainian bombings" and "Ukraine threatens the civilian population" (Vakarchuk, Nikolaieva, 2024).

A powerful indicator of the spread of Russian propaganda is the activity of Russian embassies in Latin America, which not only coordinate the amplification of pro-Kremlin messages but also create new anti-American narratives and strengthen cooperation between Russian state media, local media, and the embassies of Russia's allies in the region. In April 2025, Russia organized a series of public events to mark the "long-standing friendship" with countries of the region, emphasizing the history of relations since the times of the Russian Empire. At the opening of one exhibition, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov declared that Russia supports "the aspirations of Latin American countries for sovereignty" and advocates for strengthening their role in a "multipolar world." The Kremlin positions its cooperation with the region as "pragmatic and ideology-free," in fact attempting to legitimize its presence through cultural, economic, and historical narratives (Albul, 2025).

Russia is also actively exploiting opportunities to attract young intellectuals and activists from Latin American countries, inviting them to Russia through various programs, forums, and educational initiatives. One such initiative is the public diplomacy program "Meeting Russia", officially aimed at creating a network of young leaders from different countries loyal to Russia for future cooperation. While the program was initially oriented toward the United States and the European Union, after the invasion of Ukraine in 2022 its focus shifted to the BRICS countries, Latin America, and Southeast Asia (Shevchenko, Kosenko-Solohub, Fechko, 2024).

The new communication strategy was created to help counter the spread of Russian propaganda in the region, and Ukraine is doing everything possible to combat disinformation there. The fact-checking website StopFake.org, which is part of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN), verifies information for the Meta (Facebook) platform as a third-party partner, and since 2023 has been publishing in Spanish. Radio Martí, a sister media organization of the Voice of America, provides a truthful version of Russia's war against Ukraine. The media organization is overseen by the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) headquartered in Miami, Florida. As part of the U.S. Agency for Global Media, OCB joined efforts with StopFake.org, the Ukrainian fact-checking outlet, to counter Spanish-language Russian propaganda in Latin America and Spain (Vakarchuk, 2024).

An important step is the creation of the project "Communication and Advocacy Support for Ukraine's Position in Latin America", implemented by the NGO Ucraina Resiliente ("Resilient Ukraine"). Participants in

the project are building a pro-Ukrainian support network and conducting systematic communication in the media space of key countries in the region, namely Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, and Chile. Equally significant is the UkraineWorld Español project, which publishes news and content in cooperation with Ukrainian media and provides information about Ukrainian culture on Twitter. Prominent intellectuals, artists, and journalists from Latin American countries also launched an information campaign in support of Ukraine on social networks under the hashtag #AguaUcrania (Vakarchuk, 2024, pp. 24–27).

The Ukrainian media outlet “Militarnyi” launched Spanish-language versions of Twitter and Telegram and produces Spanish-language news content, with a full Spanish version of its news feed functioning on the website MIL.IN.UA. It relies on the support of Ukrainians in Spanish-speaking countries. A positive contribution to countering disinformation has also been made through invitations to Ukraine for groups of prominent journalists and leaders of various civil society organizations from Latin American countries.

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— An unprecedented and visible positive step is the creation of the project “Connecting Continents”, through which the Laboratory of Public Interest Journalism invites journalists from Latin America, Africa, and Asia to tell their audiences about Ukraine. Journalistic meetings took place in 2023, and a journalist from Mexico became one of the first representatives from Latin America to join the presidential initiative United24 (Vakarchuk, 2024, pp. 24–27). The visits of Latin American journalists to Ukraine became significant events that were widely covered in local, regional, and global media. To effectively counter Russian disinformation, Ukraine requires a long-term vision for developing contacts with Latin American countries.

Conclusion. Russian aggression in Ukraine has changed the approaches to shaping strategy toward different parts of the world, the establishment of communication ties, and the search for new methods of countering Russian propaganda. The new challenges and realities faced by Ukrainian diplomacy have given impetus to the planning and implementation of a new communication strategy, aimed at raising awareness of Ukraine and its role in Latin American countries. The new Communication Strategy, designed for three years, is intended to influence and change public opinion in Latin American countries and to deepen cooperation. The formation of a positive image of Ukraine will contribute to the development of multi-

lateral relations and economic and political ties. Ukraine's communication capacity remains limited during the war, but despite this, journalists and experts from Latin America continue to come to Ukraine to learn the truth about the war and the consequences of Russian aggression. A further positive development is the ongoing reform of the structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in particular the establishment of a separate Department for Latin America and the Caribbean. A differentiated approach to the region will allow for the strengthening of relations with those countries that support Ukraine. Enhanced communication efforts will increase Ukraine's presence and promote Ukrainian narratives in the region.

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