

CZU: 321.01:659.122:323(478)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5816696>

US SOFT POWER IN PROMOTING THE IMAGE OF THE STATE IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Risks and threats to international security contribute to the assertion of new peaceful methods of coexistence and cooperation of states and, in this context, the role of soft power increases unconditionally. This is a measure of achieving advantageous results, relying on conviction, voluntary participation, sympathy and attraction. In this article, we will examine the role and importance of US soft power tools in shaping state's positive external image in its relations with the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: *soft power, state image, promotion, foreign policy, cultural policy, US, Republic of Moldova.*

SOFT POWER A SUA ÎN PROMOVAREA IMAGINII STATULUI ÎN CONDIȚIILE REPUBLICII MOLDOVA

Riscurile și amenințările la adresa securității internaționale contribuie la afirmarea unor noi metode pașnice de coexistență și colaborare a statelor și, în acest context, crește necondiționat rolul soft power care constituie un mijloc de obținere a rezultatelor favorabile, mizând pe convingere, participare voluntară, simpatie și atracție. În acest articol vom supune examinării rolul și importanța instrumentelor puterii soft a SUA în modelarea unei imagini pozitive externe a statului în relațiile cu Republica Moldova.

Cuvinte-cheie: *putere soft, imagine a statului, promovare, politică externă, politică culturală, SUA, Republica Moldova.*

Introduction

Soft power is an important means of securing national interests, an essential component of the process of achievement and realisation of relations between states. Namely, through it, states carry out much of their mutual relations, building the basis for future collaborations, exploring new possibilities for achieving cooperative relations in all areas of activity. We can suppose that soft power contributes to substantiating and promoting national interests, strengthening stability, order and peace and, therefore, creating a positive image of the state on the international arena.

Soft power has been one of the few concepts of the last period, which has raised a great scientific interest in scientific and political circles. This term was introduced into scientific use for the first time by American researcher J.Nye in 1990, being conceived as the ability to achieve its goals more by attractiveness than by coercion or force [1]. Thus, soft power is a means of achieving favourable results, counting on conviction, voluntary participation, sympathy and attraction. In more recent research, soft power is already defined as the capacity to influence other states to achieve their own goals through cooperation in certain areas, directed towards conviction and the formation of a positive perception.

Soft power represents the cultural, ideological and institutional force of a state, having as an objective of find a favourable framework for development of cultural and value potential of the state abroad. Soft power is not a simple influence; it involves the ability to attract, to tempt others, and therefore, the foreign public appears to have a desire to accept or imitate. The most important elements of exercising the soft power are the values expressed by national culture, domestic politics and institutions and behaviour on the international arena.

Soft power has been a strong point for the US from the beginning, of course, long before the country became a world power recognised in the twentieth century. The US's "exclusivity", the nation's commitment to liberty, the rule of law, and the practice of the republican government, its openness to immigrants of all races and religions, its opposition to traditional governmental policies and imperialism are very closely linked to the rise of the US's dominant global role.

The increasing importance of soft power can be explained by the following circumstances: globalisation (characterised by countries interdependence, enormous speed of transmission of information); the democratisation and spread of liberal principles (not only based on the principles of soft power, but also limiting

leadership in the use of force); the huge cost of using nuclear weapons; the thirst for prosperity and stability of modern Western societies; the numerical growth of international organisations, the priority of multilateralism towards a unilateral approach.

According to researcher O.Rusakova, soft power activates the stereotypes of public perception, triggering archetypal images and collective representations. It uses attractive psychological tools for the subject to orient it in the right direction, which allows, without direct pressure and effort to subtly influence the mental structures of mass consciousness – public imaginations, preferences, passions, fun, experiences, dreams, ideals [2].

Thus, the term soft power has become one of the most popular concepts in the context of the struggle for power and influence on the international arena. This involves the ability to achieve the desired by voluntary participation of the subjects, being called to make allies or to neutralise their enemies by gentle means. Soft power can be defined as a political activity of state and public institutions and organisations, in the long term, both within the traditional and modern diplomacy, designed for the protection and realisation of national interests, by creating a positive image of the state on the international arena and the formation of friendly and influential communities in other countries. In other words, soft power is the promotion of one's own interests and approaches through persuasion and attraction of sympathy for their country, relying on their achievements not only in the material, but also in the spiritual and intellectual sphere. Largely, the soft power strategy is determined by the interests of the foreign policy of the country that promotes it. Soft power strategies are usually developed taking into account the historical and current features of relations with other countries.

Within the foreign policy of any state, the predominant instruments for its implementation are economic, military, cultural, and strategic issues. Lately, the trend of increasing the importance of culture on the international arena is being pursued. The popularisation of national culture among states becomes an integral part of the policy of world great powers. In this context, cultural diplomacy becomes an auxiliary tool of soft power. When it is used properly, states become able to influence different processes in the world, whether economic, social or political. Foreign cultural policy is a set of measures developed and implemented by the state power organs together with the society aimed at promoting and spreading the cultural and humanitarian potential of the country abroad and developing and maintaining cultural links with foreign countries in order to protect their national interests [3]. As a result, soft power can be presented as a political method of the new generation.

Obtained results and discussions

The American model of cultural diplomacy is based on all types of diplomacy, and soft power acts as a unifying element among them. With the help of soft power, the United States has spread manifestations of its cultural activities throughout the world: music, language, literature, art, cinema, etc. The US follows several ways of reaching power: violence and restraint; motivation and constraint; and attraction. The first is hard power and its military aspects. The second is the use of economic instruments in politics. Here we can include economic sanctions, as well as lending, which can be used to influence states. The last way means soft power. The values, which are at the basics of the domestic and foreign policy of the state influence its image on the international arena. Human rights safeguards, democracy, ideas of equality and justice are key elements of the soft power concept of the US policy.

In the last decade of the 20th century, the US soft power was above all competition. It acted as a magnet, attracting both human and economic capital from all over the world, using both its passive and active forms in its arsenal. Along with these, the main resources of the US power, official and informal, have been actively included.

The media, American cinema, and various objects of pop culture have created the US informal cultural policy. The processes of globalisation have contributed to this in the best possible way. The American popular culture model has intensely demonstrated its adaptability to new types of cooperation in the world. Complexity, accessibility and technical superiority have ensured its domination. Globalisation has increased the pace of introduction and fusion of the American folk culture. Many countries have begun not only to adopt America's cultural images, but also its economic development models. The so-called "Washington Consensus" was adopted by several Latin American countries. The Russian Federation followed a similar programme after the collapse of the USSR.

With the beginning of the 21st century, the US position as a global hegemon continued to strengthen. The US terrorist acts of 11 September 2001, and the reaction of the world community to them, are a sign of global solidarity towards these tragic events. For example, the title of the French Newspaper *Le Monde* of 12 September 2001: "*Nous sommes tous Américains*" (we are all Americans), directly demonstrates this statement [4]. The policy of G.W. Bush's administration shifted its emphasis on military power. The war on terrorism led to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. This event directly affected the US government's strategy of using culture as an instrument of influence on the international arena. At the same time, those events significantly undermined the US image. Realising this, emergency measures were taken to restore the country's public image. For this purpose, the Congress allocated US\$ 430 million in 2005 to invite students, cultural personalities, researchers to the US, as well as for exchange programmes for American students [5]. However, the US was unable to handle this with the rise of the anti-American sentiment.

In this context, it is important to mention that actions contribute to the consolidation of statements, but it is also essential to remember that the same words and images that have a great success in communicating with the public can create negative reactions among foreign audiences. When President G. W. Bush used the term the "axis of evil" to refer to Iraq, Iran and North Korea in his message about the situation in the Union in 2002, he was well received in the country, but foreigners reacted negatively to such a combination of diplomatic situations being guided by the moral frame [6, p.102].

B.Obama tried to get the US out of the extremely negative information environment, but faced a series of difficulties since the first year of his presidency, from the mortgage crisis, which became a global economic crisis, to the issue of the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. The presidential administration announced the use of smart power, which would be a smart combination between the soft and hard approaches, the soft one being a priority tool in the context of foreign policy. Analysing the Obama administration's two terms, we can distinguish the "over-expected" trend. The withdrawal of troops from Iraq was completed only 18 months after the inauguration. The attempt to re-establish relations with the Russian Federation was not fully realised, but served as the beginning of a new cycle of crisis. Mr. Obama himself recognised the intervention in Libya in 2011 as a serious mistake. In the context of these events, it is difficult to appreciate the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize given to the US President for his efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation among nations. Restoring relations with Cuba is the main positive result of Obama's entire political course [7].

Then, it should be noted that even according to *the global rating of soft power*, US soft power has lost its leading position compared to 2020 (in 2021, the US ranked 6th, Germany receiving the title of the most influential state in the context of the use of soft power, followed by Japan and the United Kingdom) [8] due to the troubled election campaign and unsystematic response to COVID-19, the world community is still at the centre of US influence and attractiveness. However, global challenges show that software power is not yet able to fully address them.

D. Trump's government weakened the use of non-military tools by the United States on the international arena, and its policy, aimed at "American priority", affected US international influence. It should be noted that on 8 December 2017, US President D.Trump presented a new *National Security Strategy* [9]. To increase the state's competitiveness on the international arena, the new strategy focused on four national interests considered vital: defending the country, promoting America's prosperity, maintaining peace through force, and strengthening US influence in the world. The 2017 strategy contains the motive for US global leadership, which reads as follows: "The whole world is lifted by America's renewal and the reemergence of American leadership" [10].

As for *J.Biden*, we believe that his governance will, undoubtedly, intensify the active tools of soft power and increase US foreign aid, using multilateral instruments to solve foreign policy problems to a much greater extent. In other words, there will be an intensification of the active components of the soft power, despite the fact that the passive components will remain weak.

The main US public and cultural institutions that have led to the development of the concept of soft power in interstate relations are the following [11, p.104]:

- *State institutions*, which are the main promoter of soft power, through organised cultural exchange policies and programmes. Soft power programmes are funded by the *State Department*, which coordinates the programme and pays for education, scientific and cultural exchange, and the *Superior Council of Audiovisual*, a state agency responsible for broadcasting in foreign languages (Voice of America Radio, Worldnet TV,

Radio Tuesday and Tuesday TV station, Free Europe Radio/Radio Freedom, Radio Free Asia, Farda Radio, Sawa Radio, MENR and METN). In this context, the US State Department is the key element of the American state's image of public policy elucidation, cooperation with other states in which both national interests and democratic values are promoted, as well as the opportunities to familiarise themselves with the American culture through government programmes that it implements internally and externally.

The US Department of State has its *Office for Education and Culture* (the Cultural and Educational Exchange Institution promoting mutual understanding between the US and people of other countries around the world, responsible for cultural exchange programs), but also monitors the activity of autonomous institutions such as the *National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities*, which encourages the development of arts, literature, science, scholarship programmes and the *Association of Non-commercial and Non-governmental Organizations*.

USIA existed between 1953 and 1999. In 1999, *USIA*'s broadcasting functions were moved to the new *Board of Broadcasting Governors*, and its functions of exchange and non-broadcasting were given to the new Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs within the US State Department.

The Office for Cultural and Educational Affairs is implementing a strategic programme of cultural activities designed to foster understanding between the people of the US and other countries, focusing on freedom, creativity, dynamism and diversity, the factors that have contributed to the success of the US, but the exchange of internal policy has demonstrated the possibility of changing its structure.

USAID is the government agency that works to eradicate extreme global poverty and to support democratic societies in the realisation of their potential. If the State Department is considered to be a diplomatic department that takes part in the leadership of hard and soft power, *USAID* was created specifically to promote the country's interests through soft means. Since its foundation in 1961, it has combined various foreign policy programmes. Currently, *USAID* manages exclusively the US non-military assistance in other countries, being closely associated with the US State Secretary. *The main objectives of the Agency* are [12, p.137]: assistance in the field of economic prosperity; the development of democratic values; the protection of human rights; improving human health, food security, agriculture, the environment; assistance in conflict prevention; providing humanitarian and economic free assistance in disaster situations.

- *Academic institutions or the US academic background*, which contribute substantially to the development and promotion of soft power. In this context, prestigious universities in the USA motivate the need to know the multitude of mechanisms necessary for a state to create public and cultural policies and to determine the spectrum of tactics and methods that can be applied in state practice for its promotion and the direct creation of a positive image.

The Fulbright scholarship programme contributes to the propagation of the American culture. At the same time, it provides support to foreign media, journalists and reporters dealing with US themes. The agency's duties include the permanent briefing of the president and various government departments on foreign views on the US policy and programmes. At present, Fulbright is considered to be the most prestigious and successful cultural, educational, scientific and scientific exchange programme developed by the US across the international community. *The purpose of the programme* is to intensify the mutual agreement between the American society and the other nations participating in the programme through educational, cultural, didactic exchanges even at the academic level.

The promotion of the English language is an integral part of the contemporary American mechanisms and practices of the American diplomacy. Thanks to such programmes as "*The English Language Fellow Program*", "*The E-Teacher Scholarship Program*" and "*The English Language Specialist Program*" seminars and trainings are provided with English teachers in order to elaborate and prepare manuals and publications. These programmes are meant to provide information about politics, history, society, economy, democratic traditions, American holidays, and other aspects of US life.

- *Organisations, foundations and non-governmental programmes*, involving civil society in conducting activities to effective promotion of culture and communication of the state with the external public: *SOROS*, *McArthur*, *Rockefeller* and others. They actively defend the US national interests and contribute to creating a positive image of the US around the world. An example is the *UNICEF* charity foundation, which, by raising funds, involving international volunteers and working with government, civilian leaders, celebrities, teachers and other members of civil society, contributes to the promotion of democratic values and provides support

not only for cultural exchanges but also for the well-being of certain categories of people, which as well contributes substantially to affirming the positive image of the state.

- *Diplomats and their activity.* Thus, within UNICEF, members of the diplomatic corps that promotes charitable work make a significant contribution. *The Ambassador Fund for Culture Preservation* participates directly, with the support of the US Government, in preserving historical monuments and traditions at both state and international level, promoting the idea of multiculturalism and the importance of each nation in terms of its specific colouring. Another way of showing the soft power is the activity of the "Embassy Art" programme, which promotes national specificity through exhibitions, committees and intercultural exchanges.

US cultural policies are a recent form attributed to public policies through which the state creates its image on the international arena and tries to promote itself as an interesting actor for international society through the perspectives and opportunities it can offer.

One of the US soft power vectors is *to develop and maintain democratic values* in other states. It received the largest distribution in the CIS countries with a transitional political system, such as Ukraine, Tajikistan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. Funding programmes for small and medium-sized enterprises have been developed for these countries. The programmes concerned activities in the field of equality, the development of civil society ideas, the fight against slave trade, government transparency, diplomatic resolution of conflicts, education.

Hollywood, which accounts for more than 50% of the world's film distribution, is an important channel for US cultural expansion. The popularity of American cinema since its beginning has been used by Washington, D.C. to create a favourable image for the US in the world. A characteristic feature of Hollywood cinema is the creation of films on socially sensitive themes, the description of American domestic realities. All these features of American cinema, as part of American culture, and in a broader sense of the world, have become distinctive traits of contemporary civilisation. A powerful tool of US foreign policy is *advertising*, which creates and develops a favourable image of the US among consumers around the world.

Throughout the history of the development of soft American power, the experts have introduced into the international practice various *effective methods and instruments*, including: creating a governmental soft power mechanism, the activity of which is correlated with the purpose and objectives of the US foreign policy; clearly determination of the external target audience (for the US this is the active and potential elite) to which specific soft power programs are directed; highlighting certain states and regions where a massive "blow" is needed through soft power programmes or for the advancement of the new concept of foreign and domestic policy, or for improving the image of the state; effective correlation and use of soft power programmes to change the political culture or social order of the external state; destruction of ideology and hostile values through a soft power programme suite.

Based on ideas mentioned above, we can identify the following *US foreign policy objectives*: improving the US image among the most active and powerful public; using influence on foreign elites, especially those who have the right to take decisions; creating a US investment and benefit climate in foreign states.

The phenomenon of the US's soft power success is the subject of more discussion. Often, provocative and repulsive US foreign policy violates not only the norms of morality and intergovernmental ethics but also the norms of international law. Despite this, US actions do not reject the masses of people. The percentage of young people who want to immigrate to the US in search of a better life is rising. The attractive aspect, and as a consequence, the emigration of capable cadres, contributes favourably to the country's prosperity. This image is made up of various internal and external factors, and is now deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of many aspiring to something better.

The first thing we can notice is the liberal values, the liberties the US offers to its citizens. For the US citizens, understanding of general human values is in close correlation with their history. The US is a country of immigrants who came to this territory to become independent from Great Britain. The first American immigrants broke the resistance of the Indians, conquered the Wild West, founded the progressive industry, built skyscrapers, created the most suitable living conditions and continues today in the same spirit. Values and needs formed in a person under the influence of different conditions have a significant impact on the perception of any phenomenon of vital activity, so the obligation, management and interpretation of values becomes an important device of control over the masses of people. The liberal-democratic principles of democracy, freedom, human rights, law, and private property are an axiom to which the US is looking at the

world and positioning the rest. One specific trait of the US is the belief that their ideas and values are good for everyone because it reflects the superiority of American experience and the success of a prosperous society.

Another value is the "American Dream". The essence of this value lies in the idea that American society is a country with unlimited possibilities, an open society in which everyone, regardless of their status and social origin, can only succeed on their own strength.

Another important component of American soft power is popular culture. Popular culture has become an integral part of the culture of American society, of its cultural consciousness. *The factors* that have stimulated *the spread of US mass culture* are: spreading English as a foundation for international communication (linguistic policy); the predominance of American pop music in the world; the leadership of American films and serials; exporting American products and capital with world popularity: Coca-Cola, Levi's, McDonalds, Nike, and Microsoft etc.

The analysis confirms the assumptions that US policy of soft power is currently responding to the emerging challenges but rarely prevents them. Despite the fact that over the last few years this type of foreign policy has been given more and more attention, a perfect system for implementing soft power is not yet built. In our opinion, in the condition of instability and turmoil of international environment, the US soft power activity may be delayed for a long time. However, there are results in this direction and we can reliably foresee an increase of its effectiveness.

US soft power is an independent instrument of foreign policy and includes information technologies, educational exchanges, cultural projects, etc. The ideas of J.Nye were supported by the White House, being used to the maximum in many strategic directions: the policy of modelling positive perception among foreign societies, re-launching of the political dialogue with the Russian Federation, Iran on nuclear energy, strengthening the partnership in the Asia-Pacific, the creation of the US brand as a country whose actions are aimed at securing the global good.

US soft power is considered by many researchers to be the best in the world, which objectives are concentrating on the promotion of the principles and values of American society to the foreign public. To achieve these, specialised institutions focus on adapting the message to different audiences, cooperating with the media, and achieving intercultural exchange. Such elements as reciprocity, cooperation, credibility, information and individuality are the factors that ensure the process of achieving the US soft power.

The diplomatic relations between the Republic of Moldova and the US were established on 28 February 1992. On 4 July 2017, 25 years of Moldovan-American diplomatic relations were completed. The US is among the top foreign donors of the Republic of Moldova, and since 1992, the US has offered our state over a billion dollars [13]. Researchers determined the year 2014 as the culmination of Moldovan-American relations, with a *resolution passed by the US Senate* on strengthening bonds with the Moldovan state and supporting its territorial integrity. The document also recommends increasing of cooperation in the field of information, American support for civil society and independent media, more frequent cultural and citizen exchanges [14]. The US carries out its assistance activities in the Republic of Moldova, focusing on *three essential pillars*: peace and security, strengthening the rule of law and economic growth [15, p.121].

In the cultural context, in the 1990s, Moldovan-American relations laid the foundations for the following *treaties* [16, p.156]: Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the US Government on the US Peace Corps Program in the Republic of Moldova (1993); Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Science between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the International Association for the Promotion of Scientific Cooperation in the Independent States of the former USSR (1995); Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the Government of the USA on Cooperation in the "Globe" Program (1995); Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the US Foundation for Research and Development for the Independent States of the former Soviet Union (2000), etc.

One of the institutions involved in the realisation and development of US soft resources in the conditions of our state is *the US Embassy in the Republic of Moldova*, which is responsible for the protection and promotion of American interests, establishing relations of cooperation with the Republic of Moldova at governmental and non-governmental level. Among the *attributions of the embassy* we can highlight: explaining and supporting the position of the US Government in the field of politics, economy, society and science; informing the US Government about the position of the Moldovan state in matters of importance; management of a complex assistance programme designed to promote democracy and the economy of our state; promoting the sale of

US goods and services in the Republic of Moldova; facilitating cultural and educational exchange between the US and the Republic of Moldova, etc.

The US Embassy in the Republic of Moldova is responsible for the programmes in the Republic of Moldova. The participation requirements of these programmes, for Moldovan citizens vary according to the specificity of the programme, however, some general conditions are established: citizenship of the Republic of Moldova; residence in the Republic of Moldova; return to the country after finishing the programme.

Among the programmes managed by the Embassy, we can highlight exchange programmes, English language teaching programmes, programmes for mass-media professionals, grants available for projects related to the promotion of democracy and justice reform, cultural programmes and public discussions, the Alumni program, as well as the activities carried out within the American Resource Center, and America House in Moldova.

Another institution in charge of promoting US national interests through software tools in the Republic of Moldova is *USAID*. This agency began its activity in our state in 1992 and, through it, has managed to achieve an impressive number of projects to ensure the country's sustainable development and the consolidation of democratic institutions in the state. In September 2016, the US Government represented by USAID and the Government of the Republic of Moldova signed several assistance agreements in support of responsible governance and economic development of the Republic of Moldova.

Based on these agreements, USAID has allocated US \$ 27 million to activities that will help our state build a more responsible and efficient democratic governance system, increase trade and investment in target sectors. Good governance related activities have been directed towards increasing citizens' involvement in monitoring government decision-making, improving transparency and accountability of the judiciary, improving the responsiveness of local government to citizens' needs and combating corruption. To increase investment, the projects focused on improving competitiveness, business climate and legal framework, access to credit and agricultural practices. The project with the maximum contribution to the development of the Republic of Moldova, is the *USAID program for structural reforms in the Republic of Moldova*, with a budget of 11.2 million USD, launched on 30 January 2018 [17], which aims to improve the business and trade environment in Moldova, helping the Moldovan government institutions and the private sector to accelerate the implementation of trade liberalisation mechanisms, to adopt structural reforms and to stimulate the business environment, to improve strategic communication between the private sector and public actors.

Hence, we can observe the efforts of the US for the Republic of Moldova in consolidating democratic institutions, strengthening the rule of law, economic recovery, settling the conflict in the Dniester region and USAID's activities contributing to government responsibility, establishing a link between government and citizens in the governance process.

An important programme provided to our state by the US through Millennium Challenge Corporation, for the period 2010-2015, is the "*Compact*" Assistance Program [18, p.123], the largest assistance programme that Moldova has benefited from. Major investments were made through it for the development of the Republic of Moldova's economy. Another programme supported by the US Government is the "*Farmer to Farmer Program*", where Moldovan producers developed their business, being guided by American experts. This program functioned in the Republic of Moldova from 1999 until 2011. In 2019, USAID announced the re-launch of the project.

Another institution that contributes to the promotion of US interests through soft power, under the conditions of the Republic of Moldova, is *the Peace Corps*. The first Peace Corps mission to our state was in 1993, with the aim of assisting the English language teachers in the teaching process. Since that time, about 1,000 American volunteers have provided assistance in the Republic of Moldova [19, p.157].

Another US soft power mechanism in the Republic of Moldova, designed to promote open dialogue and intercultural exchange between our state and the United States, is the "*America House*" Center inaugurated in 2018. Its purpose is to contribute to the development of more cultural, educational and professional development projects.

It is also worth noting The Ambassadors Fund for Culture Preservation that provides direct funding through the US State Department as small grants for the preservation of heritage in other countries. Since 2001, it has provided cultural preservation grants for seven projects in Moldova [20]. One of the projects was "*Treasures of the past*" at the National History Museum of Moldova with a total amount of US \$ 36,400.

Having conducted a comprehensive study of US soft power in cooperation with the Republic of Moldova, *R.Rusu* and *E.Josan*, consider the following *actions* to be necessary [21, p.125]: systematisation of US soft power instruments closes to the diplomacy of the Republic of Moldova; the revision of the MFAEI budget for finding the appropriate material and human resources for the dimensions of soft power under the conditions of the Republic of Moldova, even if the resources used by the US state are incomparable with the current potential of our state; enhanced ties with US officials to assimilate best soft power practices.

Conclusions

At the present stage, in a globalised world, the soft power of a state is a greater value than military power. The concept of "soft power" being the creator of an attractive image of the country, internal and external factor of social cohesion and a way of improving the situation of the state, can be much more efficient than strengthening the hard potential. Soft power provides the state not only with a financial profit but also with a long-lasting effect.

US diplomacy relies on all types of diplomacy, soft power acting as a unifying mechanism in them. Through it, the US has spread elements of American culture everywhere: music, language, literature, art, cinema, etc. Therefore, there is the idea of national exclusivity and a special US mission in the world, which influences the spreading of American values and its relations with other states.

Soft power, based on reputation and ideological, cultural and institutional attractiveness of the state, does not replace traditional diplomacy, but complements it by providing assistance to prepare the ground for official events in the context of foreign policy. In this context, the priority task of state governments should be to use the resources of soft power to enhance the efficiency of foreign policy activities of the state and to promote its national interests on the international arena. The Government and public diplomacy of the Republic of Moldova are also currently facing this mission.

The US Government gives its particular attention to the soft power tools implemented by both government agencies and a large number of community and individual organisations to minimize social discontent but also to shape a positive external image of the state, which is invested with a special mission to save the world. At the same time, the US attempts to pursue an active policy against threats to the image of the state, adapting itself to contemporary circumstances and moderating the inconvenient situations inevitable in the context of international dialogue. In the context of soft power, the US main message is addressed to the public of the country/nation, having a specific strategy for every people.

Software tools have an external communication influence on the extenuation of negative international resonance, caused by a series of crises stemming from the US economy. The US soft power is the funds that provide important resources for the realisation of foreign cultural policy. In addition, funds have become one of the most important political and economic levers of the global elite in the US. These are the basis of an extensive network of research and educational institutions, in particular in the analysis of international relations, which provides conditions for determining the US foreign policy course in the long term.

The key element of US soft power is the complex formation of a positive image of the state, and the active participation of the US state in solving the global problems of contemporary times increases the efficiency of soft power in the world. At the same time, we note that, with the formation of a multi-polar world, caused by the economic and political amplification of the EU and China, the US will have to accelerate the creation of a system of informational isolation of these power centres. The US will continue its struggle for strategic communication spaces through various methods of manipulation and attraction, and in the near future, the US military and economic power will become increasingly dependent on cultural and informational factors. In this context, we consider that one of the main tasks of the US is to prevent the domination of any hostile power in Eurasia, which inevitably involves the use of soft power tools in the foreign policy of the state to exert indirect influence on potential allies and competitors of the US.

Regarding the implementation of US soft power tools under the conditions of the Republic of Moldova, we must note the opening of the US state to provide real chances for knowledge and valorisation of the achievements of the American nation. Considering the fact that the US is a superpower on the international arena, building a strategic partnership between the Republic of Moldova and the US would be a particular relevance to resolving many of the problems faced by our state, such as state integrity, European integration, democratisation of society, etc.

The United States has a richer and more successful experience in using soft power, that is why the Republic of Moldova should "adopt" certain aspects of gentle action in its foreign and domestic policies. We believe that the Republic of Moldova has a soft power potential but, in the current context, it is important not to waste it and not to undermine its reputation by wrong actions undertaken by the government.

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Prezentat la 30.06.2021