

## TOPONYMICS POLICY AS A TOOL FOR IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL NARRATIVES: INFORMATION AND LEGAL ASPECT

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**Abstract:** The article reflects the genesis of the main Ukrainian regulations within its toponymics policy. The degree of their effectiveness in regulation of public relations practices in the implementation of renaming toponymics' objects has been established. The study is based on Ukrainian regulatory sources and some empirical data from Ukrainian sociological centers. Research is based on the countries' experience which have systematically implemented toponymics policies. The legal and social impact of toponymics politics on national identity is analyzed. It is suggested to consider the process of renaming toponymics' objects in the light of information rights. A special emphasis on the role of national-patriotic education in implementing place-policy is made. The features and disadvantages of implementation renaming practices in Ukraine are identified. Issues which determine the prospects for future research in the field of human rights, particularly, information rights, were formed.

**Keywords:** Decommunization, Information rights, Legal aspect, National identity, Toponymics policy.

### 1 Introduction

The toponymics policy pursued by the Soviet government was a factor in restraining the national identity of the peoples within the Soviet state. It was a kind of imperialist instrument of control over a vast territory and a population of various ethnicities. Given this specificity, power and subordination were possible only by suppressing the peoples' national identity, including Ukraine.

In the cities of western Ukraine, most of the toponyms that reflected Soviet policy and were based on the names of Soviet politicians have been changed almost immediately since 1991. Such names, which were not related to the ideology of the period, but were based on the names of prominent Soviet scientists, poets, or writers, were changed more gradually. Central Ukraine is characterized by a moderate policy of renaming, as the changes concerned only the most odious individuals from the point of view of local authorities, whose names only promoted the ideas of communism or socialism. As for the eastern regions, the renaming was carried out point by point. Soviet toponymics remained in most cities and did not change until 2014.

As a result, Eastern Ukraine was more loyal to slogans about the supposedly positive Soviet past. Thus, the region's population's consciousness was much easier to manipulate, speculating that Ukrainian statehood was a formality.

Through the prism of Soviet history, expressed in Eastern Ukrainian toponyms, the absolute eradication of Ukrainian identity was carried out, the nation's right to self-determination, and the right to know about the historical past was leveled. In a broad sense, it is a restriction of the eastern Ukrainian region's population on the right to information, which was carried out primarily through propaganda content in the media space of an independent state. The basis for this was the banal habit of perceiving the events since the adoption of the Declaration of State Sovereignty not within the period of Ukraine's independence but within its post-Soviet history. Even judging by the legislator's approach to toponymics policy, the absolute inconsistency of renaming cities, streets, etc., becomes obvious. It led to the country's de facto split into two value-oriented blocs:

Western Ukrainian - with pro-European coordinates and Eastern Ukrainian - with pro-Russian, respectively.

As can be seen, Ukraine's toponymics policy in the context of decommunization was conducted completely unsystematically and based on the initiative of the public, local activists, and local authorities. Moreover, it is difficult to point to the existence of a toponymics direction in the policy of the state because the following analysis of the legal framework of the early period of Ukraine's independence shows its absence instead.

In addition to the prospects of improving the mechanisms of national toponymics policy and scientific discussion on such public relations, studies of Ukraine's experience are also relevant for countries in Europe and the world that are experiencing separatist movements or certain national tensions due to ethnic characteristics of a particular region. In a short historical period, one country has gone through a diametrically opposite path from the policy of completely denying the existence of the Ukrainian people to the policy of reproducing national identity, from society's complete disregard for the importance of toponyms to the clear requirement to ensure historical memory by renaming the toponymics landscape.

The world community can use such experience as an example of consolidating the people and a tool to reduce tensions in national conflicts and prevent such conflicts in general.

### 2 Literature Review

#### 2.1 Legal Bases of Toponymics Policy in Ukraine

The practice of renaming toponyms objects realizes the need to awaken national consciousness and identity among the citizens of the newly born independent state [11, p.232]. Thus, with the independence of Ukraine, the issue of changing the toponymics landscape at the legislative level was raised for the first time only with the adoption of the Resolution of the Presidium of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On the establishment of a toponymics commission on the Presidium of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine" of April 5, 1993 [31]. Such a commission's main task is to preliminarily consider the submissions of local governments on issues related to the naming or renaming of settlements. The commission has also been identified as a scientific advisory body, which includes leading specialists in the field of linguistics, history, ethnography, geography, etc.

The Constitution of Ukraine of 1996 [32] referred the issue of naming and renaming of settlements and districts to the powers of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and changing the names of oblasts was determined by amending the Constitution of Ukraine, namely Section IX, as the names of such toponymics units are directly indicated in the Law.

The next stage in the formation of legislation in the field of the toponymics policy was the acceptance in 2005 of the Law of Ukraine "On Geographical Names" [33], which identified legal grounds for renaming geographical objects, namely: repetition of names of homogeneous geographical objects within one administrative-territorial unit, the need to return to individual geographical objects of their historical names, a significant change in the function or purpose of the geographical object.

This normative legal act is noteworthy, first of all, because, for the first time at the legislative level, the state recognized the right of citizens to influence toponymics policy by taking into account the opinion of the majority of the population living in the territory where the renamed or renamed objects are located, taking into account the provisions of the legislation on referendums.

According to the Paragraph 4, Part 1, Art. 16 of the current Law of Ukraine "On Culture" [34], among the powers of executive

bodies and local governments in the field of culture, among many others, the direction of preservation of intangible cultural heritage, including historical place names.

In the Law of Ukraine "On the Principles of State Language Policy" of 03.07.2012 [35], a separate section is devoted to toponyms, which provides that place names are formed and submitted in the state language, and in the territory where the regional language is widespread next to the state language. Its counterpart is reproduced in this local language.

Even though this law was declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court of Ukraine [8], the features of reproduction of toponyms mentioned in it for the first time at the legislative level in Ukraine linked language and toponymics policies of the state.

In contrast to this normative legal act, the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language" of April 25, 2019 [39], which is special on language policy issues, draws attention to issues that have not yet arisen in the legal field of our region. The inadmissibility of translating or sounding objects of Ukrainian toponyms in other languages is emphasized. The norm on the possibility of displaying toponyms objects on the indexes and the name of its Latin alphabet counterpart's state language has been duplicated. It fully corresponds to the European experience in this field. However, the old law required the display of toponyms in the regional language in some cases, while dispositive Latin transliteration. He did not determine the order of location on road signs of names of toponyms in the state language and the regional language, which also created the preconditions for abuse. For example, the current law stipulates that if a Latin version is indicated, it must be smaller and placed to the Ukrainian name's right or bottom.

The previous law was provided to reproduce Ukrainian toponyms in the regional language or the language of a national minority. This measure aimed to reduce the likelihood of incitement to hatred based on language, but the practice of applying this rule has shown the opposite result. In our opinion, the legislator has chosen the right strategic decision, making it impossible to translate the names of toponymics objects without any exceptions.

In general, it can be argued that political events since 2014 have strengthened the sense of political unity and state identity in Ukraine, including higher respect for the Ukrainian language as a symbolic marker of this state identity. This view is reflected in other studies on language policy and national identity [2, 23].

The implementation of such a comparative analysis of special laws in language policy reflects the value essence of renaming the objects of toponyms, emphasizing the special attitude of the state to national and cultural heritage. Scientific doctrine suggests that place names play a role in cultural heritage as elements that contribute to local identity formation [12]. It once again emphasizes the expediency of reflecting in the Ukrainian legislation in the field of culture such an object of cultural heritage as historical place names. However, it leaves open the question of the diversity of interpretations of the concept of "historical place name", the investment of convenient meanings in it.

Returning to the retrospective review of the legislation, we note that a special period of raising the Ukrainian people's national identity was 2015, characterized by adopting some regulations. Among them are the laws of Ukraine "On perpetuating the victory over Nazism in World War II 1939-1945" and "On the legal status and honoring the memory of fighters for Ukraine's independence in the XX century", which became the crown of the heroism of the Ukrainian nation in the struggle for identity own state. Subsequently, the provisions of these laws were laid down, including in the process of renaming toponymics objects.

In accordance with Part 4 of Art. 5 of the Law of Ukraine, "On the legal status and honoring the memory of fighters for the

independence of Ukraine in the XX century" [40], among the ways to promote the perpetuation of the memory of independence fighters is the fixation of their names in the names of settlements – territorial units, as well as the names of geographical objects.

It is not without reason that Pierre Bourdieu emphasizes the struggle for symbolic capital, which is the state's monopoly on the legal "naming" of toponymics objects, including the names of national heroes. They are the embodiment of the symbolic capital that they acquired in previous battles for a certain worldview that underlies the state ideology [5, p.239]. Some researchers believe that the system of renaming city streets serves as a "memorial arena" where the struggle for cultural difference and "symbolic capital" takes place [1, p.168]. Indeed, examples of the Ukrainian people's heroism can be considered social capital at the national level. It is the engine of Ukrainian statehood development, awareness of identity, integrity, and ethnic unity.

It is believed that social capital is an important factor in the great struggle for the legitimization of a particular government [20, p.406]. Stefan Meyer states that renaming streets is usually a political act when the state shows its authority and the exclusive right to interpret its own history [25, p.106]. Simultaneously, the public may not share the importance that political elites attach to new names, which emphasizes the performative boundaries of street names as political statements [42, p.195].

### 3 Materials and Methods

The performativity of renaming toponymics objects is a reflection of the reorientation of society's values, which can occur in two directions:

- 1) Change of toponymics landscape as a consequence of the change of values;
- 2) Change of values due to changes in names.

The first way is more flexible, softer, more organic for society. The second can cause social resistance, dissonance, misunderstanding of the need for such a renaming.

We believe that the systemic renaming is not just a political statement but a signal of a radical change in public policy and the vector of social development. Toponymics renamings caused by changes in political leaders reflect the goals and tactics of each new national government [18].

The Law of Ukraine "On Condemnation of Communist and National Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes in Ukraine and Prohibition of Propaganda of Their Symbols" of April 9, 2015 [36] became an indisputable reflection of the vector of modern toponymic spolicy in Ukraine.

The adoption of this Law gives grounds to assert the efforts of the legislator to systematically approach the implementation of decommunization policy, part of which is carried out by consistent and orderly renaming of toponymics units.

Thus, in particular, the Law stipulates that the names of oblasts, rayons, settlements, districts in cities, etc., which use the names or pseudonyms of persons who held leading positions in the Communist Party, the names of the USSR, USSR associated with the anniversaries of the October Revolution are symbols of the communist totalitarian regime. The regime, which is recognized as criminal by the same Law and, consequently, the symbols of which are prohibited.

The responsibilities of public authorities are determined to hold relevant public hearings and submit proposals to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on renaming settlements, districts, and oblasts, the names of which contain prohibited symbols. There is a period of six months for the submission of such proposals, during which the legislature decides within three months to rename such objects, and in the absence of proposals, only the

recommendations of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory are taken into account.

The scale and importance of such a policy are indicated by the fact that such requirements also apply to districts in cities, squares, boulevards, streets, etc.

At the same time, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, during the study of the constitutionality of this Law stressed that given the history of the independent Ukrainian state, the historical context and the threats posed to it in connection with the temporary occupation of part of its territory, Ukraine has the right to defend constitutional principles, including by banning the propaganda of totalitarian regimes and the use of their symbols [9].

#### 4 Results

Given the socio-political events that could have resulted in the loss of Ukraine's sovereignty in 2014-2015, the establishment of particular deadlines for "decommunization" of toponymics units indicates that public authorities have identified such actions as an effective means to stabilize the political situation and further level specified threat.

In the future, regulatory and legal regulation of toponymics policy is carried out point by point. Is evidenced by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On approval of the action plan for the preparation and celebration of the 80th anniversary of the proclamation of independence of Carpathian Ukraine" [10], which provides for the renaming of toponyms persons of Carpathian Ukraine, in particular the President of Carpathian Ukraine Augustyn Voloshin. Such measures include the need to find such strong historical figures, the name of toponymics objects in whose honor will contribute to national identity. We will address this issue in more detail below.

Besides, given the lack of sovereignty of Ukraine over the occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea, an important legal and political measure is the adoption of the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On renaming certain settlements and districts of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol" [37] on the prohibition of communist symbols. The resolution comes into force from the moment of the return of the temporarily occupied territory under the general jurisdiction of Ukraine. Carrying out the renaming of settlements for the future is a feature of toponymics policy and decommunization processes in Ukraine that distinguishes it from any other post-Soviet country.

Thus, the peculiarity of regulatory regulation of relations in the field of the renaming of toponymics units in Ukraine is that such regulation is directly related to society's demand for decommunization, is activated by external factors, and is carried out in three stages:

- 1) The period from Ukraine's independence to the Revolution of Dignity, characterized by chaos and the state's disregard for the issue's urgency;
- 2) The period from the beginning of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine to the present time, which is carried out quickly under the influence of the need to preserve national identity;
- 3) Renaming to the future, which aims to demonstrate the vector of policy and prepare the legal framework for the return of the temporarily occupied territories under the jurisdiction of Ukraine.

However, there is a lack of a comprehensive approach to the renaming process in Ukraine, as in post-socialist countries, aiming to rehabilitate the urban space from the symbols of the Soviet regime rather than restore and promote images of Ukrainian identity. It should not be overlooked that memorable street names play an important role in the symbolic construction of national identity, mainly in terms of awareness of historical heritage [3, p.196].

In the period before the intensification of decommunization processes, the Ukrainian renaming policy was generally declarative. It was carried out by delegating this function to lower government levels, which, in turn, often did not implement it due to lowering the priority of this issue.

Antagonistic approaches generally characterize political confrontation in Ukraine. However, in terms of implementing the decommunization process, there is an almost absolute consolidation of political forces. This is another confirmation of the choice of a single political direction in the state, and the systematic implementation of decommunization measures, especially in terms of toponymics rebranding, is a great proof of the coherence of information policy in the state. It is necessary to reach the level of collective historical memory, the formation of which should play a consolidating role and create the preconditions for national unity. This process will be facilitated by a unified strategic sense approach to renaming toponymics objects taking into account local features, but without going beyond the strategic narrative defined by the current Doctrine of Information Security (from now on - the Doctrine) [15].

#### 5 Discussion

##### 5.1 Empirical Research and Features of Strategic Narrative

On November 2018, in cooperation with sociological institutions - Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies. O. Razumkova and the Rating Sociological Group monitored the electoral sentiments of Ukrainians. The survey included several social issues, particularly the areas that, in the opinion of the respondents, need the most reforms in Ukraine. The item "Humanitarian reforms (educational reform, Ukrainization of the information space, decommunization)" received the least votes. Interestingly, Minsk residents, on the other hand, express discomfort about Soviet street names, illustrating that the public's reaction to renaming processes may differ dramatically in different cities or countries, depending on the context [6].

The results of the survey of Ukrainians show a neglect of the above-mentioned social capital. Researchers of the memorial and cultural heritage emphasize that it has a political and symbolic character, reflecting attempts to form a sense of historical heritage and public memory. This contributes to the realization of the mnemonic goal - the formation of memorial triggers associated with certain historical events [29, p.8-9]. The Polish experience shows that the order of renaming was hierarchical, as great attention was paid to the rule that the central streets should be named after prominent figures [25, p.142, p.160].

Access to qualitatively new strategic narratives is characterized by longevity, and their implementation in Ukraine takes place during the hybrid war. In such circumstances, the unmet or partially unsatisfied human need for security is obvious. Because of this, other needs, deeper, are not perceived in society as a priority. Realizing this, the ambiguous response to decommunization processes is predictable. Their intensification within the framework of toponymics policy creates preconditions for bringing to public discussion those issues that previously remained "in the air."

At first glance, these survey results reflect the view that there are more urgent needs in Ukraine than the need to rename streets. It is fully true, as the question of strengthening national identity, including the decommunization of toponyms, was to go hand in hand with the process of declaring the independence of the Ukrainian state. However, then these issues, as well as now, were not considered as important for the formation of the state. The result was the use of this ideological gap by the aggressor state. Currently, the process of renaming toponyms in Ukraine makes it possible to manipulate this fact, presenting it in a negative connotation, although such renaming is a very justified measure of public policy. Decommunization in Ukraine has become one of the strategic narrative segments, the existence of which was specified only in 2017 with the advent of the Doctrine of Information Security of Ukraine.

Also, this Doctrine identifies a list of current threats to Ukraine's national interests and national security in the information sphere, among which the uncertainty of the strategic narrative was singled out. In the content of the Doctrine, it is defined as a specially prepared text intended for verbal presentation in the process of strategic communication in order to have an informational impact on the target audience.

The Order of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine "On Approval of the Concept of Strategic Communications of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the Armed Forces of Ukraine" [24] (hereinafter - the Concept) provides for the term "national narrative." The difficulty arises from the fact that it is specifically included in its content, given that this order covers only the military sphere. We propose to proceed from a set of sectoral laws and other strategic documents in the areas defined by the Law of Ukraine "On National Security of Ukraine" of 21.06.2018 [38], namely, the areas of military, foreign policy, state, economic, information, environmental security, cybersecurity of Ukraine, etc.

Instead, we find the definition of "strategic narrative" in the above Concept as a fundamental idea that reflects and defines the basic principles of existence and development of the state (its institutions), the nature and direction of internal and external relations, which form the direction of state (departmental) policy. This definition is indeed departmental, as it focuses primarily on the Ministry of Defense activities and the Armed Forces of Ukraine. However, it has clear structural elements of the fundamental idea of the existence of the state, namely:

- 1) Principles of state development;
- 2) The direction of internal and external relations.

Suppose we extrapolate this system to the decommunization process in Ukraine. In that case, we will see that the decommunization of toponyms plays one of the main roles in the formation of a strategic narrative within the information and legal policy of the state.

Prospects for the study of toponymics policy are determined by the national interests defined by the Doctrine in terms of "protection of Ukrainian society from aggressive informational influence of the Russian Federation aimed at propaganda of war, incitement of national and religious enmity, forcible change of constitutional order or violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity." It is pertinent to note the existence of destructive informational influence of an external nature (on the part of the Russian Federation) and an internal one (in terms of the use of communist toponyms, which creates obstacles to the formation of national identity). There is an urgent need to rethink the system of national values in politics and other spheres of life of Ukrainian society. A clear definition of national priorities and interests creates quite logical preconditions for the eradication of old narratives, including within toponymics policy. Thus, there is a direct causal link between toponyms' decommunization and the creation of conditions for national self-identification.

Decommunization and related topics are the main narratives that contribute to the formation of a policy of remembrance of Ukrainians as a separate nation, thus realizing the people's right to self-determination provided by the Declaration of Principles of International Law on Friendship and Cooperation under the UN Charter. In addition, through the process of decommunization of toponyms is the actualization of the paradigm of human rights in terms of exercising the right to information under Art. 5 of the Law of Ukraine "On Information" [30].

## 5.2 Information Rights and Toponymics Policy: Problems and Prospects

The above-mentioned Doctrine defines the national interests of Ukraine in the information sphere, in particular, the vital interests of the person, including:

- 1) Ensuring the constitutional human rights and freedoms to collect, store, use and disseminate information (the right to information);
- 2) Ensuring the constitutional human rights to the protection of private life (right to privacy);
- 3) Protection from destructive information and psychological influences (information security, which in scientific Doctrine is still considered through the prism of the human right to a secure information space).

Given the state of hybrid war (DIME war - Diplomacy, Information, Military, Economy), in which Ukraine is, the information component is a set of measures to decommunize and deideologize not only the virtual but also the public space. The human right to a secure information space is the core of such measures. In our opinion, this right corresponds to the state's duty to create such conditions for human life. The codes will not be pressured by the names and symbols of a particular ideology. This is the main goal of toponymics policy in Ukraine, the implementation of which has become most effective within the decommunization processes.

In fact, there are a number of other factors that influence the formation of national identity, and in interaction with which the human right to a secure information space goes beyond the cross-border level. Researchers emphasize the blurring of national identity in connection with globalization processes, particularly the process of digital transformation. The World Wide Web creates easy conditions for cross-border influences, which are a means of "spreading a common system of beliefs, worldviews, language structures, stereotypes, ways of linking form and content and other categories that determine the features of thinking and communication in a society" [28]. This suggests an increase in legal measures to ensure human security in the information space at both the personal and national levels. New digital conditions can pose a threat to information security, so they need preventive measures to prevent information attacks.

One cannot agree with the idea of using the term "toponymics war," although it exists in scientific Doctrine. It is interpreted as a situation in which marginalized nationalities and language cultures within certain countries appropriate and rewrite place names on maps as part of their measures to counteract the national identity of ethnically belonging peoples [21, p.85]. Such measures are undoubtedly part of an information campaign against a nation embodied in a state to intervene in its territory or seize part of the territory under the slogan of "emancipation and liberation from oppression" or to create unfavorable conditions for the functioning of the state apparatus. In such a state, security is a basic need that the majority of the population is dissatisfied with. In this situation, the nation's development and prosperity recede into the background, as illustrated by the above survey.

Of particular interest within the implementation of toponymics policy are the right to information and the human right to secure information space. In the first case, we can talk about a specific manifestation of this right, which is access to information about the historical past. The second is about the neutralization of destructive information influences that distort information about the historical past and inhibit the formation of national memory, including through the names of toponyms objects.

Undoubtedly, ensuring access to information is a human informational right that stimulates the formation of national self-identification, self-awareness of the nation through obtaining factual data about the state's historical past and people. When discussing the importance of symbols of the past, it should also be noted that the symbolism associated with a particular object may acquire different connotations associated with certain symbols that change over time [26, p.22].

The "right to the truth" deserves special attention, which narrows the content of the understanding of access to information. There is a well-known practice of allocating this right to information about past human rights violations, which some scholars define as a segment of the general public's right to know such cases. The report of the French expert Louis Janet in 1997 of the UN

Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities included this very right, which he proposed to interpret as a collective right to knowledge of human rights violations that exist in history. In his opinion, this should prevent the recurrence of such violations in the future. Corresponding to this right is the "duty to remember" which the state must assume in order to protect itself from distortions of historical facts; for the knowledge of the oppression experienced by a particular people is part of the national heritage of the people and must be preserved [7, p.8-9].

From a legal point of view, we believe that it is not necessary to single out individual rights, which in essence embody the right to information. The concretization of the right to truth is necessary rather than for scientific doctrine because it makes it possible to analyze the right to information in a particular legal regulation area. In our opinion, the right to truth covers more deeply the practice of renaming toponyms objects in view of the historical context.

It is also worth supporting the need to disseminate information on cases of human rights violations, particularly during the anti-terrorist operation (ATO), and later - the Joint Forces Operation (JFO). Renaming of toponyms objects related to high-profile cases of human rights violations, namely the names of victims of such encroachments, is a manifestation of the social feature of the state, which is provided by the Constitution of Ukraine.

The idea of interpreting the right to information as a collective right also deserves attention because the direct participation of local governments in activities related to the naming or renaming of settlements in combination with the above right to truth is an expression of personal information rights exercised, including number through local toponymics policy.

### 5.3 National-Patriotic Education as a Segment of Toponymics Policy: Formation of a Model of Historical Memory

Undoubtedly, the memory of past experiences, including the negative one that appears before us in cases of human rights violations, performs a preventive function, forming a particular trigger in society. This trigger can be certain signs, symbols, sounds. So when it comes to renaming the objects of toponyms, it is a tool of the state in creating certain triggers in the population's mass consciousness. Such a trigger is the cause of certain emotions, hopes, and expectations, which form a strategic narrative (the direction of development of the state and the principles of its domestic and foreign policy). A relevant example of such a trigger is the naming (renaming) of squares and streets in the Ukraine settlements to honor the feat of the participants of the Revolution of Dignity and perpetuate the memory of the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred. Such an event was provided by the Decree of the President of Ukraine "On honoring the heroism of the participants of the Revolution of Dignity and perpetuating the memory of the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred" from 11.02.2015 [14]. Its implementation took place within the decommunization processes.

In fact, the toponymics policy outlines the perspective of discourse as a source of forming new symbols of the national model of "historical memory" [22, p.5]. It is very important to avoid using renamings as a tool to remove one layer of historical memory in favor of another because the new names should consolidate Ukrainian society, not divide it [17, p.134]. For example, in Wrocław, the city's toponyms were redesigned during the communist era, not only for reasons of conformity to the dominant ideology. At that time, the city was under German rule, and therefore many of its streets were named after the heroes of this country, which was perceived by official propaganda and much of society as the greatest enemy [26, p.24]. It is worth noting that toponyms are often transformed to suggest or cause a certain evolution in society, to make fundamental worldview changes [19].

Turning to the post-Soviet practice of renaming in Poland, we see that the streets, which were given strong symbolic names of

the communist period, were given no less ideologically strong analogs. The most notable examples were Lenin Avenue, renamed Solidarity Avenue, and the Six-Year Plan and Cuban Revolution Avenue merged together and renamed John Paul II Avenue [26, p.25]. As we can see, communist names had an undisguised ideological discourse, and changing street names was a well-trying and effective way of introducing and disseminating the permitted version of history that the political elite sought to embody in the ordinary lives of "ordinary" people, with the main intention of creating a new collective memory [4, p. 29].

The model of historical memory is based on a sense of patriotism. Some scholars, studying aspects of patriotism development, consider it in two forms: ethnic and civic patriotism. They directly emphasize the abuse of regional elites in the struggle for power by the ideas of collective memory and national identity, unless ethnic patriotism is transformed into civic patriotism. This may even be "a condition for the emergence of separatist movements and new state (or quasi-state) formations, which is currently observed in eastern Ukraine [41, p.71].

Such abuses can be traced back to the communist era, as the "permitted version of history" was introduced into Ukrainian toponyms precisely because of ethnic patriotism in a distorted form. Ukrainians' presentation was available exclusively within the Russian state (first the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union). This example illustrates how a one-sided interpretation of history creates the conditions for one state to control another through the loss of national identity. Even at the present stage, Diesen and Keane [13] emphasize that both the West and Russia seek to encourage a certain historical narrative about Ukraine that is in their interests in the region.

Returning to the Polish experience of renaming, we note that it testifies to the correctness of Ukraine's chosen way of replacing communist names with the same ideologically strong names. This approach is justified, but it is very important to avoid excessive heroism, which can cause opposition or misunderstanding in society. Educational activities will also help avoid bias or other negative reactions to the naming of modern heroes' toponyms objects.

Having considered the reflection of the model of historical memory in toponyms objects and clarified the importance of educational activities on the social significance of renaming, we propose to move to the practical aspects of their implementation, which are based on the idea of civic patriotism. Interestingly, some researchers operate in the category of "civic identity" as derived from ethnic identity. Gwendolyn Sasse and Alice Leckner state that the period 2017-2018 in Ukraine appears as a rare moment of identity change [27, p.94].

Turning to the provisions of the current Strategy of National-Patriotic Education (hereinafter - the Strategy), approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine [16], we find that this type of educational activity is an integral part of the national security of Ukraine. Taking into account the intensification of decommunization processes, this Strategy identified the need to overcome the imperial-totalitarian rudiments in the public consciousness and due to Russification, destruction of Ukrainian spiritual and cultural heritage, and historical memory differences in perceptions of the historical past, including the totalitarian era, and famines. Due to the listed realized threats, it is expedient to take measures for:

- 1) The formation of an active civic position (civic patriotism);
- 2) Affirmation of citizens' national identity based on the Ukrainian people's spiritual values, national identity.

It is possible, taking into account the development and dissemination of the Ukrainian people's socio-state and spiritual and moral values by forming a national-patriotic worldview. Within this activity, it is very important not to ignore the issue of restoration and preservation of national memory, which is

expressed, inter alia, through historical toponyms as an element of cultural heritage.

Therefore, the order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On approval of the action plan for the implementation of the Strategy of national-patriotic education of children and youth for 2017-2020" of October 18, 2017, provided for measures to "perpetuate the memory of fighters for independence in Ukraine in XX century. Persons who participated in the protection of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and the anti-terrorist operation in eastern Ukraine, by naming or renaming in the prescribed manner in their honor objects of toponyms.

Besides, one of the primary factors of national-patriotic education is "respect for the memory of victims of communist and other totalitarian regimes in Ukraine, including victims of the Holodomor, political repression and deportation."

For example, the Decree of the President of Ukraine "On measures in connection with the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine" of March 28, 2007, provided for measures to rename in the prescribed manner the objects of toponyms, the names of which are associated with persons involved in the organization and implementation of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine and political repressions. By the way, to exercise discretionary power, this is one of the first legal acts by which the president obliged the local authorities to such renamings.

Thus, this direction of educational activity is closely correlated with the toponymics policy because events related to public sacrifice are an integral part of historical memory and must be reflected in the names of cities, squares, and streets as a memorial to the sacrifice for the bright future of the nation.

## 6 Conclusion

Assessment of the state and current trends of toponymics policy in Ukraine allows us to formulate the following features and shortcomings of its implementation.

Toponymics policy in Ukraine is characterized by inconsistency and chaos, a close connection with the need to decommunize society in general, and the toponymics landscape in particular. Since Ukraine's independence, the renaming of toponyms objects has depended only on local authorities' free will and public activity.

However, Ukraine's political events have forced the use of all possible means to ensure national identification, including by creating a mechanism for active change of the toponymics landscape by central authorities, in particular, the Parliament of Ukraine, in case local authorities strongly oppose.

Ukraine uses the experience of post-Soviet countries to find strong national personalities that unite the nation or are politically neutral and uses geographical and historical features in the formation of toponyms.

Distinguishes Ukraine from other post-Soviet countries in the legislation provides for the procedure of legal regulation of renamings for the future, in terms of decommunization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea after returning to the jurisdiction of Ukraine.

Examining the implementation of toponymics policy in Ukraine and other post-Soviet countries, we conclude that it is an interdisciplinary phenomenon that combines historical, national, social, political, moral, and legal processes that reflect and determine the vector of their development.

The toponymics policy is a previously underestimated system of forming national identity by post-Soviet countries and one of the promising tools for implementing national narratives defined by the state's relevant development strategies.

Thus, the toponymics policy's main goal is to unite the country within a certain strategic narrative, based on the ideas of national identity. Deviation from this goal will cause only resistance or even aggression in society.

We conclude that toponymics policy is an instrument of information security of the state, the implementation of which is impossible without the realization of the person's right to information provided by the Constitution of Ukraine; determines the formation of the "historical memory" of the nation and is provided with appropriate educational activities.

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#### Primary Paper Section: A

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