

## GEOPOLITICAL ASPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TRANSBOUNDARY MULTI-RELIGIOUS ETHNOCONTACT REGION

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### Abstract

The peculiarities of the formation of the main geopolitical strategies for the development of the transboundary, ethnocontact region have been revealed and the detailed analysis of the development of geopolitical factors during the Independence period of Ukraine has been carried out. The Chernivtsi region is a demonstrative example of such a region, in which representatives of many nationalities live (Ukrainians, Romanians, Moldovans, Russians and others), and also the territories inhabited by Ukrainians, Romanians and Moldovans encounter here, which makes it possible to characterize the region as ethnocontact.

The results of the conducted study reveal a new vision of the problems of relations in the Chernivtsi region with representatives of the most numerous national groups of the population, including Ukrainians, Romanians, Moldovans and Russians, as well as prospects for further interethnic and interstate relations.

As a result of the application of various research methods, the typification of the administrative divisions of the Chernivtsi region based on the stability of the geopolitical factors of their development has been carried out, the chronology of the development of interstate relations between Ukraine and Romania, and the emergence of ideas of various types of separatism (territorial, religious, political, etc.) have been analyzed, as well as the recommendations to various state and local authorities concerning preservation and increase of such their sustainability have been developed. It was established that the main factors of the formation of the geopolitical situation in the region under study include ethnic, linguistic, religious, socio-economic, cultural, educational, historical-geographical and foreign-policy, and the territorial dependence of the political situation on these factors has been described.

They can be used in the process of working out of various regional development programs and in the strategizing for interstate relations between Romania and Moldova.

**Keywords:** ethnocontact region, transboundary region, geopolitical situation, semi-ethnic region, multi-religious region, language of instruction.

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### 1. Introduction

The topicality of the issue of changes in the political situation in certain regions of Ukraine is unconditional. Today, Ukraine is under significant and irreversible changes in terms of domestic and foreign policy and active reform of all spheres of Ukrainian society. Consolidation of the Ukrainian society and ensuring the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups is perhaps the most important task for the modern Ukrainian state.

Even today Ukraine has faced the issue of ensuring the rights of national minorities and providing some ethnic groups with national and cultural autonomy. The problem of separatism, provoked not from the inside but also from the outside, in particular by the governments of the neighboring countries, is also quite a large one, which inevitably can lead to a crisis of Ukrainian great powerness in the event of the authorities low-key role. This problem should be tackled by economists, political scientists, diplomats and social geographers, since considering this issue in terms of social geography will help understand all aspects of the problem better and suggest ways to solve it. Therefore, the topic of scientific research is of great practical importance nowadays.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in the fact that for the first time, from the perspective of social geography and geopolitics, geopolitical aspects of the development of the transboundary, multi-religious and ethnocontact region of Chernivtsi are considered; the typification of the administrative divisions of the region on level of the stability of the geopolitical factors has been carried out; the chronology of the development of interstate relations between Ukraine and Romania and the emergence of ideas of various types of separatism (territorial, religious, political, etc. ) have been analyzed.

## **2. The objective the study**

Analyze the geopolitical development of the transboundary, polyethnic and ethnocontact region of Chernivtsi, to identify the main positive and negative aspects of the polyethnicity of the region, to judge the stability of the geopolitical factors of the development of Chernivtsi region and its administrative divisions.

According to the objective, the main tasks included:

- 1) to form the socio-geographical essence of the factors of the geopolitical development of the polyethnic, transboundary, ethnocontact region;
- 2) to trace the factors of formation of geopolitical transformations in the region under study;
- 3) to analyze the peculiarities of the geopolitical situation and its territorial differences in the region under study;
- 4) to carry out the typification of the administrative divisions of the region based on the stability of geopolitical factors.

## **3. Research materials and methods**

The main principles and doctrines of the Constitution of Ukraine, the Different Laws of Ukraine, which regulate the international activity of the state and its ethno-cultural, religious, educational development; texts of the Treaties and Agreements signed between the governments of Ukraine and Romania; as well as the scientific works of various scholars were the methodological basis of the research.

During the research, systematic, chorological and chronological approaches were used with the use of such research methods as statistical, cartographic, cluster analysis (Kohonen self-organizing maps), descriptive, comparatively-geographical, questionnaires, analysis and synthesis, literary and others.

The information basis for conducting the actual researches was provided by the statistics of the Principal Directorate of Statistics in Chernivtsi region, regulatory legal acts of Ukraine and Romania, various scientific and journalistic articles, reports of the Culture Office of Chernivtsi Regional government department, data from own questionnaires and other materials.

## **4. Results of the research of the geopolitical development of the transboundary ethnocontact region**

The state, as a special political entity, ensures the security and integrity of its sovereign territory and represents the public interests of its people on the international stage, building good-neighborly relations with other countries. Today, the geographical location; size of territory and population; economic and natural resource potential; historical-geographical factors are the main factors influencing the degree of political influence and power of the state. The group of the

latter may well include a factor in the geopolitical development of transboundary multi-religious regions of the state.

The significance of this factor is extremely great both during the formation and in the course of functioning of the already established state, because a stable political situation in the border areas of the country is a guarantee of its independence and further development. In addition to the geographical factor, the ethnic factor which can be a significant advantage and at the same time a disadvantage for the construction of the country and its relations with its neighbors, is of great importance.

In Ukraine, transboundary, polyethnic and multi-religious regions include Transcarpathia, Chernivtsi, Odessa, Donetsk, Lugansk, Kharkiv ones and Autonomous Republic of Crimea, where a high proportion of two or more nations lives. All these regions are areas of political tension. The annexation of the Crimea to Russia and the hybrid war on the Donbas are the reason for the actual break of relations with Russia, the problem of Transcarpathia is a cause of tension in the Hungarian and Ukrainian relations, and the question of Chernivtsi region may be the cause of a diplomatic conflict with the Romanian government. In this context, the negative role of the factor of polyethnic transboundary regions for Ukraine, which at the present time has led to conflicts with neighboring countries and violation of the territorial integrity of our state, becomes clear.

As for the positive role, it can be traced in Ukraine's relations with Romania and Hungary. Along with the negative aspects of relations with these countries, the Romanian and Hungarian governments are interested in cooperation with Ukraine that is their largest neighbor. The presence on the territory of Ukraine of numerous Hungarian and Romanian communities is an inducement for investments in the Chernivtsi region and Transcarpathia region by Hungary and Romania who are interested in raising the living standards of their diaspora representatives on the territory of Ukraine.

In our opinion, the main geopolitical factors that determine the development of transboundary polyethnic territories are political, legal, economic, ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural, educational, historical, administrative-territorial, electoral, military-political and factors of interstate relations and cooperation, which determine the nature of the geopolitical stability of a particular region.

Unfortunately, the main tendency of the development of polyethnic zones nowadays, especially at the western borders, is the actual removal of these regions from Ukraine and the strengthening of cultural and economic ties with countries that are interested in shaking the political situation in our country.

The close relationship between the border areas of Ukraine and neighboring countries is based on historical periods and the influence of different ideologies and concepts, from Russian great powerness to Hungarian chauvinism.

The uncertainty in their future and the threat of direct invasion provoke panic among the population and the desire to have a "reserve airfield", which results in mass registration by citizens living in the western transboundary regions of citizenship of other countries. This problem also requires a detailed survey and the identification of the main dangerous factors of a large number of multiple citizenships who live in Ukraine.

At the same time, the process of finalization of places of compact residence of national minorities in Ukraine is slowly moving into the phase of separation of territories with purely Romanian, Moldovan, Hungarian or Polish populations. Such a separation of national minorities in recent years leads to the following factors:

- reduction of political activity of representatives of national minorities;
- occurrence of local interethnic conflicts;
- reduction of the Ukrainian ethnic territory;
- an increase in the percentage of representatives of national minorities in certain administrative districts;
- growing of separatist sentiment in transboundary regions.

Such features of the system of resettlement of national minorities in Ukraine undoubtedly are a destabilizing aspect of the development not only of polyethnic regions, but of the whole state.

One of the most important characteristics of the population of any territory is its ethnic and confessional structure. They determine the cultural, material and spiritual diversity of the region

and form one or another of the neighboring relations of different ethnic and confessional groups and are the reason of uprising certain political movements here.

At the end of 2001, representatives of 76 ethnic groups lived on the territory of the Chernivtsi region, indicating the diversification of the national structure of the region's population [1].

The most numerous national groups living in the region are representatives of 7 nationalities: Ukrainians (68,9056 people, 75 %), Romanians (11,455 people, 12.7 %), Moldovans (67,225 people, 7.3 %), Russians (37,881 people; 4.1 %), Poles (3367 people, 0.3 %), Belarusians (1483 people, 0.2 %), Jews (1443 people, 0.2 %) [2]. The number of representatives of other nationalities was only 4,018 people, which is only 0.4 % of the population of the region.

No less important characteristic of the population of any region of the country is the linguistic features of its ethnic composition, as in modern conditions, the question of the linguistic composition of the population often passes into the geopolitical plane.

On the whole territory of Ukraine one can observe a situation when not all representatives of one or another nation use the language of their nationality. The reason for this phenomenon is that in the course of various historical events, some people were assimilated, and some were under pressure from other, ruling nations. Chernivtsi region is no exception. Moreover, this region is one of the most striking in the aspect that in different periods of history parts of the territory of Chernivtsi region were constituents of different states, such as Kievan Rus, the Galician-Volyn kingdom, the Moldavian principality, the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Russian Empire, Romania, The USSR, and Ukraine, so each new government pursued its own, often chauvinistic, policy on the issues of nationalities and languages of national minorities.

Following independence, the number of Russian-speaking educational institutions has sharply decreased, through the process of Ukrainization and the policy of popularizing the state language in the country. At the same time, a lot of schools and kindergartens with the usage of Romanian language were created in Chernivtsi region, the airtime of Romanian programs on radio and television has been increased and the periodic printed publications in the Romanian language have been established.

The vast majority of the region's population, numbering 694.5 thousand people or 75.6 % named Ukrainian as the native language of the main nationality [2]. In 1989, this figure was only 70.8 %. Russian was recognized as native language to 48.4 thousand people, or 5.3 % of the population, while in 1989 they were 10.5 % per cent [1]. The share of all other languages is 19.1 % of the population of Chernivtsi region, and it increased by only 0.4 % during the intercensal period.

Among the most numerous nationalities, the majority of Ukrainians (98.5 %), Romanians (91.9 %), Moldavians (91.6 %) and Russians (91.5 %) recognized the language of their nationality as their native one. In addition to these nationalities, the vast majority of the Hungarians, the Armenians, the Gypsies and the Azerbaijani also did so. All other representatives of national minorities identified Ukrainian or Russian as their native language, for example, 47.8 % of the Poles named Ukrainian as their native language, and 55.0 % of the Jewish people and 50.2 % of the Belarusians determined the Russian language as their native one. However, the proportion of the Jewish people who determined Ukrainian as their mother tongue grew by 22.6 % and of the Belarusians by 14.6 %, which is evidence of active linguistic assimilation.

The religious composition of the population has a significant influence on the development of culture, spirituality and the formation of socio-political life, especially in those regions where different national groups live, relating to different confessions [3]. At the turn of the Millennium, significant political changes have taken place in the life of the Ukrainian people, including collapse of the USSR, independence, the democratization of society, the prioritization of human rights and freedoms, and, finally, freedom to worship. Thanks to the latter the return of the old and the formation of new religious movements, the increase in the number of wards and religious buildings, as well as the diversification of the confessional population took place.

As of January 1, 2018, 1,141 religious communities have been registered in the territory of Chernivtsi region, which belong to different movements of Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Eastern cults. Orthodoxy is the most widespread trend of Christianity in the region, which in total has 613 communities. There are 4 Orthodox denominations in the region: the Ukrainian Orthodox

Church (UOC), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP), the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) and the Russian Orthodox Old Believers Church (RPCS). Catholicism is represented in the region by Roman Catholic church (30 communities) and Ukrainian Greek Catholic (26 communities) church [4]. In addition to the Orthodox and Catholic, there is a rather large Protestant community in the region (448 communities). Khotyn district, (62) Novoselytsia district (51) and Chernivtsi city (78) include most Protestant communities while Putyla district (7) has the least number of it [4], because the ethnocultural group of Ukrainians called Hutsuls prevails here. In addition to Christianity, there are Judaism and Muslims on the territory of the region. Judaism is represented by 12 communities, 9 of which are in Chernivtsi city, as well as Vyzhnytsia district, Novoselytsia district and Khotyn district have 1 community each. Muslimism is represented by only one community located in Chernivtsi city [4].

The role of education and culture in preserving national identity lies in the representatives' of national minorities learning of the mother tongue and traditions, which is the foundation of the positive development of the country, and especially its polyethnic regions.

The current state of ensuring the educational rights of national minorities can be analyzed on the example of the Chernivtsi region. Today from almost 96,000 students of general secondary education institutions, 81.5 thousand students (85.0 %) study in Ukrainian, 14 thousand students study in Romanian (14.7 %) and 300 students study in Russian (0.3 %) [5].

In addition to providing educational rights to citizens of other nationalities, the state must ensure the preservation of their culture and identity through the provision of the functioning of national and cultural communities, the celebration of national holidays, meeting the needs of the literature, the press, television and radio broadcasting, the free use of national symbols, which will not be contrary to current legislation. To this end, Polish, Austrian and German, Belarussian, Korean, Armenian and Jewish national cultural communities are active on the territory of Chernivtsi region. However, the cultural activity of the Romanian and Moldovan community, which is the most numerous in the region (19.8 %), deserves special attention, since out of 22 national cultural communities, 14 belong to this national community [4]. 3 of these have the status of All-Ukraine, 9 have the status of regional and 2 have the status of urban.

In addition to these national cultural societies, the Romanian Community Hall and the Romanian Cultural Center "Eudoksiu Khurmuzaki's" successfully operate in the region. There are many national artistic groups in the region, the most famous of which are the Romanian dance ensembles "Mertsishor" and "Izvrash", the Romanian music bands "Mugurel" and "Play", the Dragosh Voda choir, which operates under the Community of the Romanian Culture in the name of Mihai Eminescu.

Also, a number of national Romanian and Moldovan holidays are celebrated every year in the region: the Romanian Spring Festival "Mertsishor", events and memorial services for the victims of Stalinist repression carried out with the assistance of district state administrations in Hertza district, Glyboka district, Novoselytsia district, Storozhinets district and in Chernivtsi city, Folk Festival "Bukovina Meetings, traditional Romanian feast "Limba Noastre cha romina" ("Our native Romanian language"), annual Romanian Christmas festival and Christmas carols "Florile-Dalbe" and the Romanian National Day, which is celebrated annually on December 1st.

Meeting the needs of the Romanian and Moldovan communities in the media, in particular in the press, television and radio, is also important for the preservation of the identity of national minorities. Today 12 Romanian newspapers are printed in Chernivtsi region, the main of which is the newspaper called "Zorile Bukovynei" and 3 bilingual Ukrainian-Romanian district newspapers. The fifth part of the TV (9.5 hours) and the fourth part of the broadcasts (12.3 hours) of the Chernivtsi Regional State Broadcasting Company are in Romanian [6].

The socio-economic development of the regions is equally important. Chernivtsi region is a transboundary area, so there is a significant impact of the economic systems of neighboring countries. Cooperation with other states within the European Region has a significant positive impact on the economic situation in the region. However, the borderline position has become the basis for the development of contraband networks that have a negative impact on the economy and the image of the region.

Since 1991, the Ukrainian state border has been carrying out essentially not a barrier but a contact function, which is connected with the collapse of the totalitarian closed Soviet state system. The contact function of the border is to create, on the border of two states, common nature reserves and European regions [7]. In the period 1993-2000, four European regions were established on the border with the EU countries, including “the Carpathian” (1993), “the Bug” (1995), “the Lower Danube” (1998) and “the Upper Prut” (2000) whose main task is to strengthen the contact function of the border and to develop common strategies for the social and economic development of the border areas.

Chernivtsi region is a unique one and is included (together with Ivano-Frankivsk region) into two European regions, namely “the Carpathians” and “the Upper Prut”, which results in close cooperation not only with the border areas of neighboring Romania and Moldova, but also with the eastern regions of Poland, Hungary and Slovakia.

However, there is also a negative aspect of the transboundary deployment of the Chernivtsi region territory connected with the branching of the contraband network along the entire Ukrainian and Romanian border. For example, according to the response to our request of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine in Chernivtsi region, in 2017, 173 people were detained for illegal movement of goods across the state border and goods worth 24.6 million UAH were confiscated [8].

Consequently, such type of transboundary cooperation as the activity of European regions is not only a spur for the economic growth and improvement of living conditions of the population of the border areas of the states, but also an incentive for the establishment of good-neighborly relations between the states and overcoming any conflicts on a historical basis. In addition, the functioning of European regions for Ukraine is a regional form of integration into European space through the development of cooperation mechanisms, typical for the European Union.

The peculiarity of the electoral thought of the population is an important characteristic of the overall political situation in the region, especially if one considers the results of the election through the prism of polyethnicity and ethnic composition of the population.

Chernivtsi region is the region with the largest support of left and center-left forces in Western Ukraine, which is associated with a high proportion of national minorities. The results of the 2004, 2010, and 2014 presidential elections reveal some trends. In particular, in 2004, due to Yushchenko’s clear preference for most of the polls a bit lower result is observed in the places of residence of the Romanian population, in the settlements located along a border of Romania and Moldova. The results of the repeat voting on November 21, 2004 did not change the situation in the distribution of sympathy for voters. Neither Yushchenko’s team nor the authorities managed to significantly affect the situation in the places of compact residence of the Romanian and Moldovan population. Thus, the Hertza district brought victory to V. F. Yanukovich from 53.8 % of the votes, and Novoselytsia district, giving the pro-government candidate a total of 36.2 %, in some settlements far exceeded the 50 % limit in his favor [9]. It should be noted that the configuration of electoral priorities in 2010 compared to 2004 in the territory of the Chernivtsi region has changed somewhat. According to the Central Election Commission, Yulia Tymoshenko was supported by 66.47 % of Bukovinians in the second round of presidential elections. She won in all four election constituencies of the region. Viktor Yanukovich was supported by 27.64 % of the voters in Bukovyna. Compared to 2004, Viktor Yanukovich (47.54 %) received low support in the 206<sup>th</sup> district (Novoselytsa district, Glyboka district and Hertza districts), where he won a victory in 2004.

After his victory in the elections in 2010, Viktor Yanukovich ends his term in the third year of office during the Revolution of Dignity, which became the reason for the Extraordinary Elections of the President of Ukraine in May 2014. According to the Central Election Commission, Petro Poroshenko was supported by 56.72 % of the inhabitants of Chernivtsi region. He won in all the election constituencies of Bukovina. Yulia Tymoshenko was supported by 18.84 % of Bukovinians. The current President received the greatest support on the territory of the 204<sup>th</sup> district, while the residents of 205<sup>th</sup> district supported him worst.

The basic form of legal communication between a person and a state is citizenship. Today, the institution of citizenship is the object of attention of all Ukrainian society. Until recently, the question of citizenship was not raised at all, but in today’s geopolitical conditions it is very

relevant for our state, especially for the border polyethnic regions, one of which is precisely Chernivtsi region.

The issuance of Romanian passports to citizens of other states is governed by the Romanian Law “On Citizenship” No. 21 [10]. Section 10 of this law states: “Former Romanian citizens who lost Romanian citizenship by December 22, 1989, for reasons beyond their control or, if their nationality was abolished without their consent, as well as their descendants to the II knee, can restore or receive Romanian citizenship as a result of a petition, while maintaining their place of residence in a country or abroad, provided that they comply with subparagraphs (b), (c), (e), (f) of Section 8. “

Thus, the Romanian passport can be obtained by the overwhelming majority of citizens of Chernivtsi region, as well as virtually all ethnic Romanians and Moldovans, who have come of full age, who can speak the Romanian language and have no criminal convictions, as well as virtually all ethnic Romanians and Moldovans. Such simple conditions for obtaining the citizenship of a foreign state are a direct threat to national security and territorial integrity.

According to unofficial data, more than 200 thousand Romanian citizens live in Chernivtsi region. In the course of the anonymous survey conducted on the territory of Hertza district, Glyboka district, Novoselytsa district, Storozhynets district and Chernivtsi city, it was found out that the largest number of Romanian citizens there is in Hertza district and Glybokadistrict (82 % and 69 %), slightly less in Novoselytsa district and Storozhinetsdistrict (51 % and 45 % ) In Chernivtsi, about 23 % of the population have multiple citizenship.

Following independence of Ukraine, the Romanian government has repeatedly spoken about the need to revise the former Romanian-Soviet border. For example, Romania refused to sign a treaty on the state border with Moldova in order not to “re-legislate the consequences of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. “In the case of Ukraine, any disputes over the land border were completed in 2003 with the signing of the Treaty on the functioning of the state border. However, the delimitation of the Black Sea shelf remained unresolved until 2009 [11]. During the process of “Romania v. Ukraine”, the International Court of the United Nations decided to change the maritime boundaries, which was satisfactory from both sides, although Romania actually won the process and received almost 80 % of the area of common territories [12]. In 2009, claims were raised on the property of the island of Maikan at the mouth of the Danube, but the dispute has not been considered and the river island remained a part of the territory of Ukraine.

The Chernivtsi region, as a former constituent of Romania, is also a part of the geopolitical interests of the southwest neighbor, whose actions, in fact, constitute a threat to national interests and national security of Ukraine [13]. In 2014, Romania began to pursue a frank policy of irredentism, in relation to Ukraine that is, a policy aimed at annexing a part of the territory of another state, based on the ethnic principle or the fact of the former possession, because of attempts to destabilize the political situation in the region.

As a consequence of such indifference on the part of population to the idea of reunification with the Romanian state, Romania actively pursues a policy of “small steps” to undermine regional stability and embody the idea of “Great Romania” (the concept of Romania’s restoration on the borders of 1940). For example, today, Bucharest has an overtly unionistic policy (a movement for the unification of Romania and Moldova) concerning Moldova. In Ukraine, the policy of “small steps” is characterized by the following factors:

- 1) Mass issuance of Romanian passports;
- 2) Romanization of the Moldavian community;
- 3) Protest against the adoption of the Law “On Education”;
- 4) Romanization of the religious sphere;
- 5) Propaganda in the media and education.

However, despite all the circumstances, the Chernivtsi region will remain a peaceful region. In the course of an anonymous survey conducted among the Romanian community in the region, only 5 % of citizens support the idea of the entry of the Chernivtsi region into Romania. Moreover, 69 % of respondents still want to live in Ukraine, 3 % want to move to Romania, and 13 % do not want to live either in Ukraine or in Romania.

Consequently, it is safe to say that Chernivtsi region today, despite its multinational status, is a stable region, and the probability of an outbreak of separatism is extremely low.

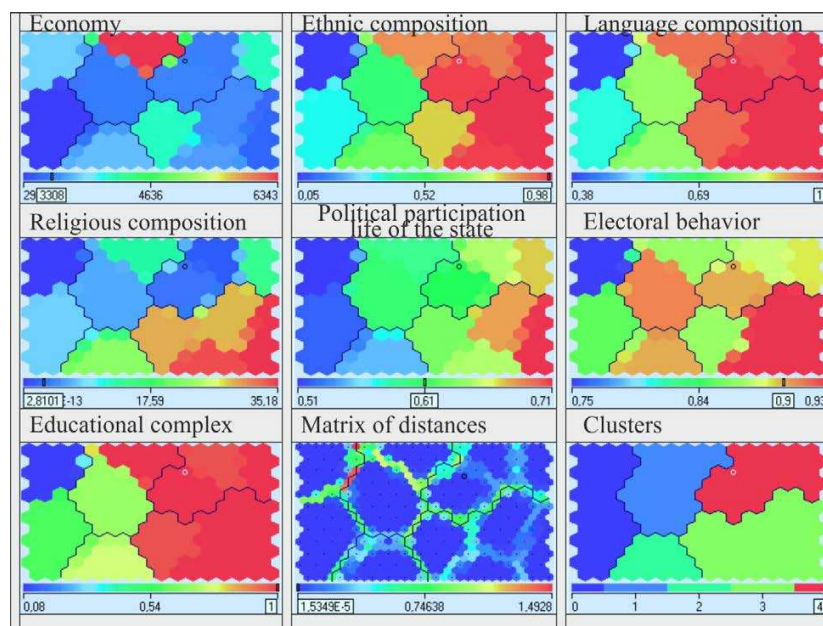
In order to typify the administrative districts of Chernivtsi region based on the stability of the factors of geopolitical development, we carried out a cluster analysis, which allows the regions to be grouped according to the similarity of certain statistical indicators and the results of the questionnaire. In order to carry out such typification, 35 statistical indicators for each of the factors of geopolitical development were selected.

**Fig. 1** illustrates the possibility of uniting on some of these factors that were the most interesting, namely economic development, ethnic, linguistic and religious composition of the population, participation in the political life of the state, electoral behavior, development of education (first of all language of instruction). It is also possible to trace the matrix of distances, which points to the most favorable and less favorable conditions for the unification. Analyzing the map data, one can make the following basic conclusions that the most similar to each other on the properties before the unification are:

- 1) the ethnic and linguistic composition of the population, as well as the peculiarities of the educational process (it is obvious that some differences are formed as a result not of language of instruction, but the quality of students' knowledge during the External Independent Testing);
- 2) participation in the political life of the state and electoral behavior of the population.

Economic development and the religious composition give the opposite characteristics of the clusters, and also do not show interdependence with other clusters, although at first glance the religious composition must correlate with the ethnic composition.

- 1) Economics;
- 2) Ethnical composition;
- 3) Language composition;
- 4) Religious composition;
- 5) Participation in the political life of the state;
- 6) Electoral behavior;
- 7) Education complex;
- 8) Matrix of distances;
- 9) Clusters.



**Fig. 1.** Kohonen maps of some geopolitical factors of the development of administrative divisions of Chernivtsi region



The five clusters (Fig. 2, 3) of the administrative-territorial divisions of Chernivtsi region were distinguished by the possibility of uniting the degree of stability of all geopolitical factors in relation to the policy of Ukrainian centrism:

*Cluster 1:* Areas with high stability of geopolitical factors, which are characterized by prevalence in the national structure of Ukrainians, high level of command of the Ukrainian language, religious mosaics of the dominance of different branches of orthodoxy, average indicators of the level of economic development, and high political activity, but different electoral preferences. These include Putyla district, Khotyn district, Kelmenets district and Sokryryany district.

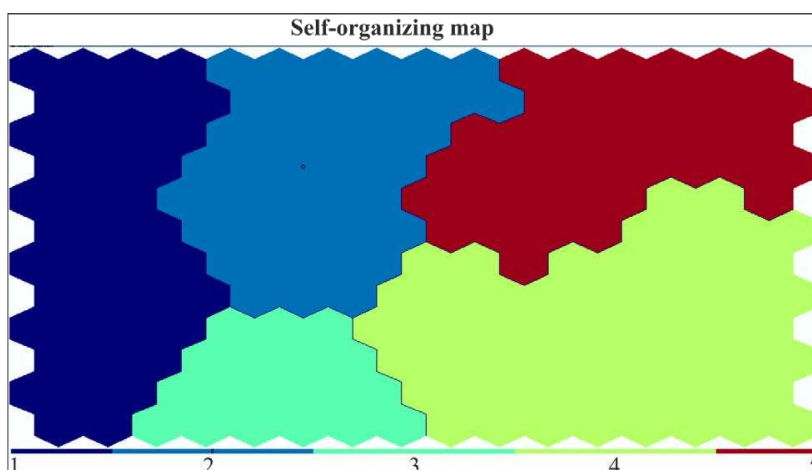


Fig. 2. Map of self-organization of regions and cities of Chernivtsi region for the stability of factors of geopolitical development

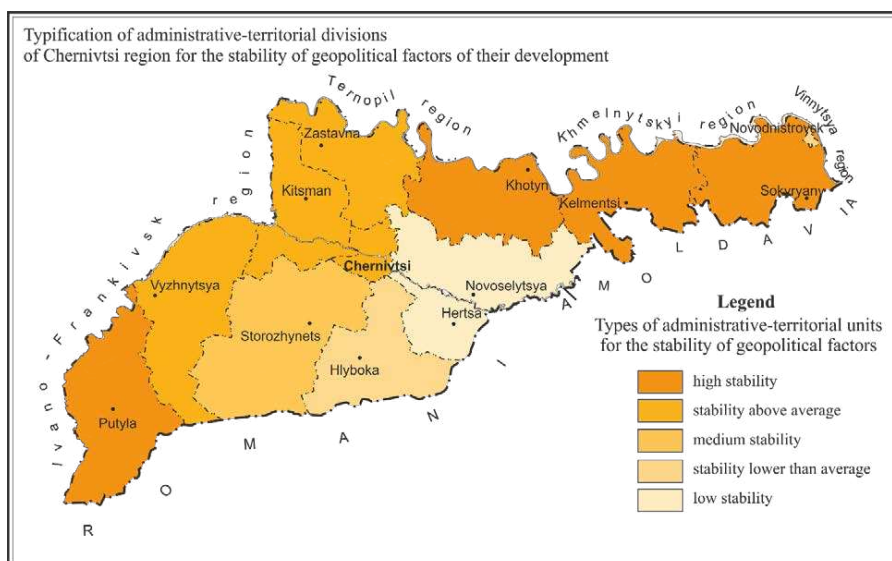


Fig. 3. Typification of administrative-territorial divisions of Chernivtsi region for the stability of geopolitical factors of their development

*Cluster 2:* Areas with higher than average stability of factors of geopolitical development are characterized by prevalence in the national structure of Ukrainians, the highest level of Ukrainian language proficiency, religious mosaics of the domination of Orthodoxy of various branches, among which Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kiev Patriarchate occupies a prominent position, high level indicators economic development, high political activity, and electoral preferences in the direction of political right-centrism. These include Kitsman district, Zastavna district, Vyzhnytsya district and Chernivtsi city.

*Cluster 3:* An area with an average stability of the geopolitical factors of the region's development, which is characterized by a significant proportion of Romanians, many Romanian and Polish language schools, average indicators of economic development, religious mosaics of the domination of various branches of Orthodoxy, high political activity, and electoral preferences, which clearly correlate with the national structure of the population. This includes the Storozhinets district.

*Cluster 4:* Administrative divisions with lower than average indicators of the resilience of geopolitical factors, these regions are characterized by prevalence in the national structure of Ukrainians with a significant proportion of Romanians and Russians, insufficient level of command of the Ukrainian language, religious mosaics of domination of the UOC, average indicators of the level of economic development and the average political activity, electoral preferences in the direction of left centrism. To this cluster belong Glyboka district and Novodnistrovsk city.

*Cluster 5:* Areas with a low degree of geopolitical development are characterized by prevalence in the national structure of Romanian and Moldovan population, very low level in Ukrainian, prevalence of one confession (UOC) in most settlements, average indicators of economic development, high political activity, electoral Preference in the direction of left-centrism. The cluster belongs to Hertza district and Novoselytsa district.

## 5. Conclusions

The problem of separatism and political instability is the paramount one for modern Ukraine. That is why it is extremely important to eliminate any manifestations of interethnic conflicts and attacks on Ukrainian territory by other states. On this basis, we propose the following solutions to the problems:

### ***Change in policy regarding national minorities***

To build a peaceful society, it is necessary to enlist the support of all social groups, in particular of national minorities. In our opinion, the policy platform for ethnic groups should consist in preserving their rights to language, education and culture while respecting the traditional values of the Ukrainian people and the compulsory study of Ukrainian language and history in schools must be preserved, too.

### ***Development of a new platform of relations with foreign countries***

The new concept of interstate relations should be created on the basis of respect for the territorial integrity of Ukraine by the countries of the world, respect for Ukrainian legislation and a clear prohibition on interfering in the internal affairs of the Ukrainian state.

### ***Changes in Ukrainian legislation in the field of internal security (appeals for separatism and citizenship)***

A clear prohibition of dual citizenship and criminal responsibility for secret possession of a passport of another country can be a significant factor, which will significantly reduce the number of Ukrainians who want to issue citizenship of Romania or Hungary, while retaining the Ukrainian passport. In addition, it is worth to raise the punishment for calls for separatism and eliminate all the organizations that are engaged in incitement of conflict and ethnic hatred.

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## “MAGNIFICENT EDIFICE OF THE HISTORY OF SLAVIC LITERATURES”: Y. BOYKO-BLOKHIN’S “PROJECT”

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### Abstract

The article deals with Y. Boyko-Blokhin’s approach to the problem of comparative analysis of Slavic literatures in the context of contemporary comparative study (U. Weisstein, R. Wellek, D. Āurišin, A. Dima, D. Nalivayko, D. Chizhevsky). The careful attention of the scholar to “peculiarities” of national development of literatures as a subject of the research is emphasized. Specifically, the interpretation by Y. Boyko-Blokhin of such concepts as “interaction” (not only as a rapprochement, but also as a mutual repulsion) and “influence” (primarily as a creative transformation of foreign artistic and aesthetic experience, and hence, as an impetus, impulse for own original creation) is thought through.

The opinion of the scholar as to characteristic aspects of the comparative study of East Slavic literatures is analyzed and the emphasis is given to the researcher’s close attention to the question of national features of each of these literatures. The efficiency and potential of Y. Boyko-Blokhin’s concept of comparative study of East Slavic literatures, aimed at understanding of their place in Common Slavic and West European literary space are substantiated. The importance of the scholar’s thoughts about the need for “reformatting” (“reorienting”) of the Slavic paradigm for the further development of this science (in view of unjustified “domination” of Russian literature over Ukrainian and Byelorussian literatures) is underlined.

The consideration is given to Y. Boyko-Blokhin’s approach (“project”) to compilation of the history of Slavic literatures (vector of which is oriented from the study of peculiarities of literary works towards comprehension of the style as a unifying principle), with an emphasis on comparison of national development trends. The recognition in this context of the progress of other art forms is regarded as fully compliant with the special attention paid by contemporary comparative studies to the problem of literature in the art system (U. Weisstein, D. Chizhevsky, D. Nalivayko)

The great importance for the continuous progress of Ukrainian comparative literature of the views of Y. Boyko-Blokhin, who developed traditions of national comparative studies and at the same time used the latest West European methodology, given the impossibility of its full-fledged advance during the Soviet period, is accentuated. The relevance of the scholar’s thoughts and ideas for comparative world literature even nowadays is demonstrated.

**Keywords:** comparative history of Slavic literatures, interliterary interaction, influence, West European context, national identity.