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## **RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN HYBRID WAR – THE ANALYSIS OF THE POLISH AND THE AMERICAN POINTS OF VIEW**

ROSYSKO-UKRAIŃSKA WOJNA HYBRYDOWA  
– ANALIZA POLSKIEJ I AMERYKAŃSKIEJ PERSPEKTYWY

**Summary:** In this article discusses the issues related to the war in Ukraine. This war is an example of hybridity in the armed conflicts. The article draws attention to the position of two countries – Poland and the USA, which have interests in this conflict. The first part presents the definition of a hybrid war, while the second contains a description of the positions of the Polish and US authorities on the aspect of the war between Ukraine and Russia and the social opinions in these countries on this subject.

**Keywords:** hybrid war, Ukrainian-Russian conflict, public opinion

**Streszczenie:** Autor porusza kwestie wojny na Ukrainie. Wojna ta jest przykładem hybrydowości w konfliktach zbrojnych. W artykule zwrócono uwagę na stanowisko dwóch państw – Polski i USA, które mają interesy w tym konflikcie. W pierwszej części przedstawiono ujęcie definicyjne wojny hybrydowej, natomiast w drugiej zawarto opis stanowisk władz Polski i USA wobec wojny pomiędzy Ukrainą a Rosją oraz opinie społeczne w tych krajach na ten temat.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wojna hybrydowa, konflikt ukraińsko-rosyjski, opinia społeczna

### **Introduction**

The pending hybrid war in Ukraine is a phenomenon that brings the attention of many countries. Due to the geopolitical location of Ukraine and the sphere of influence that Russia is fighting for, particular interest is shown by, among others, United States and Poland.

The concept of hybrid war should be understood as a kind of war (conflict or any other form of hostile activity) that takes place in many areas of the state's activity. Its participants are also civil units protected by law, often balancing on the border of it. Hybrid war is a term with many definitions, often undermined by scientists in a given field, because many of them have different opinion on this issue. The phenomenon of hybrid war in the context of the events in Ukraine is used interchangeably with the concepts of: conflict, crisis, hybrid activities and hybrid aggression.

For the purposes of this text, two countries were ringfenced due to the interests of combining them with the fighting parties and the demonstrated activity for ending the war. The selected states are the United States and Poland.

The subject of the study is a hybrid war between Russia and Ukraine from the point of view of two NATO members: United States and Poland. The author will discuss actions which were taken by these states to overcome this war. There will also be presented the analysis of statements of the polish and American authorities and the public opinion about situation in Ukraine.

### **Definition of hybrid war**

The researcher of the described issue is a former US Army officer Frank G. Hoffman. His team analyzed various theoretical models of conflicts to formulate a new scientific paradigm regarding to the future wars. According to the Hoffman team, hybrid wars consist of: conventional actions, terrorist acts, irregular tactics, armed groups, mass violence, partisan activities and criminal activities<sup>1</sup>. Hoffman also emphasizes the important role of non-state actors<sup>2</sup>.

After analyzing the features distinguishing the hybrid war, Hoffman describes the hybrid war as a phenomenon, which is: "[...] characterized by [...] physical and psychological, kinetic and non-kinetic convergence, military and civilians [...] armed forces and communities, states and non-state actors and also by the

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<sup>1</sup> F.G. Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st century: Rise of the Hybrid Wars*, [http://www.potomacinsti-tute.org/images/stories/publications/potomac\\_hybridwar\\_0108.pdf](http://www.potomacinsti-tute.org/images/stories/publications/potomac_hybridwar_0108.pdf) (22.06.2018).

<sup>2</sup> F.G. Hoffman, *Hybrid Warfare and Challenges*, [smallwarsjournal.com/documents/jfqhoffman.pdf](http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/jfqhoffman.pdf) (22.06.2018).

combat abilities of opponents"<sup>3</sup>. According to Hoffman's forecast, everyone should be ready for a situation in which none of the parties will undertake any public acts of war<sup>4</sup>. In a row, according to the definition recognized by the National Security Bureau (BBN - Poland), we interpret the phenomenon of hybrid war as "a war combining various possible means and methods of violence, including especially regular and irregular armed operations, operations in cyberspace and economic, psychological, information campaigns (propaganda) etc"<sup>5</sup>.

To sum up, in the context of above mentioned conceptualizations, the shape of the hybrid war is still not completely defined. It still causes disputes among experts. Part of this is due to the fact that the understanding of a hybrid war diffuses with the concepts of conflict, contention and any actions incompatible with the interests of a given state. Hybridism itself also overlaps with other types of war, deviating from models of classical and conventional warfare. Therefore, attention should be paid to multidimensional activities, unclear intentions, involvement of entities from outside uniformed services and other units financed by state authorities.

### **The position of the US authorities to the hybrid war between Russia and Ukraine**

Russia began the war in Ukraine during the presidency of Barack Obama, who in a telephone call with President Putin expressed "deep concern over the obvious violation by Russia of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine"<sup>6</sup>.

The then US Secretary of State John Kerry threatened the Russian authorities that military interference in the affairs of Ukraine will have serious

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<sup>3</sup> M. Wojnowski, *Mit „wojny hybrydowej”*. *Konflikt na terenie państwa ukraińskiego w świetle rosyjskiej myśli wojskowej XIX–XXI wieku*, <https://www.abw.gov.pl/pl/pbw/publikacje/przeglad-bezpieczenstwa-4/1213,Przeglad-Bezpieczenstwa-Wewnetrznego-WYDANIE-SPECJALNE.html> (22.06.2018).

<sup>4</sup> L. Sawin, *Wojna hybrydowa*, <http://geopolityka.org/analizy/leonid-sawin-wojna-hybrydowa> (22.06.2018).

<sup>5</sup> „Hybrid war” – BBN Dictionary <https://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/bezpieczenstwo-narodowe/minislownik-bbn-propozy/6035,MINISLOWNIK-BBN-Propozycje-nowych-terminow-z-dziedziny-bezpieczenstwa.html> (22.06.2018).

<sup>6</sup> *Obama ostrzegł Putina przed interwencją na Ukrainie: „będą konsekwencje”*, <http://niezalezna.pl/52384-obama-ostregl-putina-przed-interwencja-na-ukrainie-beda-konsekwencje-nasza-re-lacja> (22.06.2018).

consequences in relations with the US, the European Union, and Russia's position in the international arena. In his statement in the Senate, he said that "Russia lied to him and other people in the face" about his activities in Ukraine and he was the biggest propaganda propagator since the Cold War<sup>7</sup>. However, he did not specify whether he was in favor of providing Ukraine with weapons by the USA<sup>8</sup>. The White House said that President Obama, in conversation with French President Francois Hollande and Prime Minister of Canada Stephen Harper, determined that "Ukraine's sovereignty and its territorial integrity must be respected"<sup>9</sup>.

The House of Representatives of the US Congress condemned by majority the actions of the Russian armed forces. It also demanded international observers to be sent to the Crimea and other parts of Ukraine. The Russian intervention in Ukraine was also condemned by the Senate in its resolution<sup>10</sup>. The US ambassador to the UN Samantha Power during the UN Security Council meeting called for the immediate sending of international UN and OSCE observers to Ukraine in order to prevent further escalation of the conflict<sup>11</sup>. Power admitted that "the actions of Russians in Ukraine are a violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and also threaten international security and peace"<sup>12</sup>. She therefore urged Russia to leave the territory of Crimea immediately.

President Obama has publicly admitted his participation in the overthrow of President Yanukovich in Ukraine. President Obama's statement confirmed that Washington has repeatedly participated in the overthrow of the government of the country and replaced it with others about extreme-right, fascist views, useful for Washington's interests. It took place, among others in Latin America, Asia and Africa, as well as in Ukraine<sup>13</sup>. President Obama also considered to provide

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<sup>7</sup> *Wielka Brytania pomoże w szkoleniu wojsk ukraińskich*, <http://www.newsweek.pl/swiat/sytuacja-na-ukrainie-na-zywo-rosja-grozi-ukrainie-odcieniem-od-gazu,artykuly,357765,1.html> (22.06.2018).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> *Kongres USA potępia Rosję. „Naruszyła niepodległość Ukrainy”*, [http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114871,15608157,Kongres\\_USA\\_potepia\\_Rosje\\_\\_\\_Naruszyła\\_niepodleglosc.html](http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114871,15608157,Kongres_USA_potepia_Rosje___Naruszyła_niepodleglosc.html) (22.06.2018).

<sup>11</sup> *Obama ostrzegł Putina...*, op. cit. (22.06.2018).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> *Washington Was Behind Ukraine Coup: Obama admits that US “Brokered a Deal” in Support of “Regime Change”*, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/washington-was-behind-ukraine-coup-obama-admits-that-us-brokered-a-deal-in-support-of-regime-change/5429142> (22.06.2018).

armaments to Ukraine if the diplomacy fails. BBC and i.a. Global Research reports that NATO, led by the US, has begun operations to supply arms to Ukraine by 2014<sup>14</sup>, in order to equalize opportunities and make aggression unprofitable for Russia. The disproportion of forces in the armies of Ukraine and Russia is illustrated in picture 1.

President Obama, during one of his speeches, announced that Russia defended its actions in the Crimea in the UN Security Council<sup>15</sup>. On the other hand, President Putin assured that the elections in the Crimea took place legally and are a reflection of the will of the people<sup>16</sup>. Former defense secretary Liam Fox announced that it doesn't matter if there be a ceasefire during this conflict, there should be delivered weapon to Ukraine<sup>17</sup>. The attitude of Americans to sanctions on Russia and to providing weapons to Ukraine in 2015 is showed in picture 2.

President Obama has held talks, among others with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, about the weapons delivery to Ukraine. He pointed out that he did not want to arm the Ukrainian army for offensive actions, but for defense purposes<sup>18</sup>. After the above-mentioned talks, representatives of Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France were preparing for a planned meeting in Minsk (Belarus) to discuss actions concerned around ceasefire<sup>19</sup>. He also sent a telegram to President Petro Poroshenko on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the announcement of Ukrainian independence, in which he assured that "the United States will continue to support you in your desires to bring [...] the European future to all Ukrainians"<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> S. Lendman, *US-NATO Delivering Arms to Ukraine. The Planning of Aggression against Russia*, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/us-nato-delivering-arms-to-ukraine-the-planning-of-aggression-against-russia/5419850> (23.06.2018).

<sup>15</sup> *President Obama Speaks on Ukraine*, Wypowiedź Prezydenta Barracka Obamy, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4W8Be32jnOM> (23.06.2018).

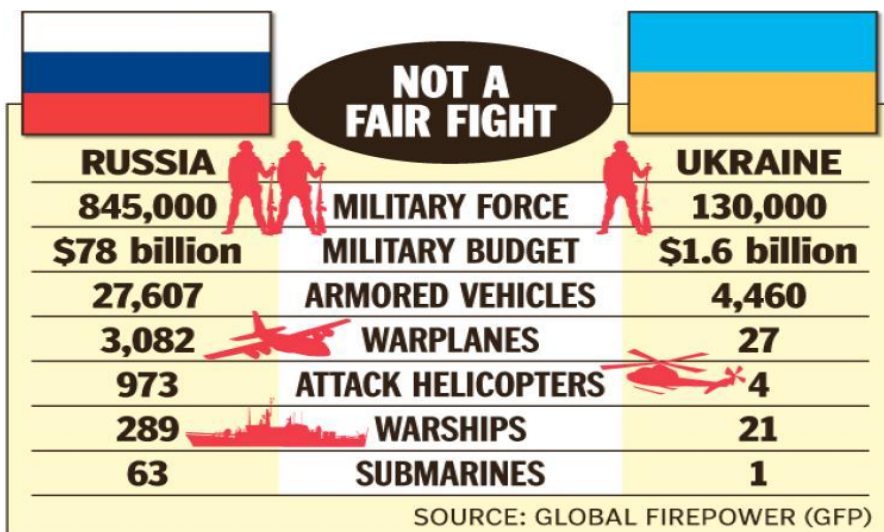
<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> *UK government defends role in Ukraine-Russia crisis*, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/feb/10/uk-government-defends-role-in-ukraine-russia-crisis> (23.06.2018).

<sup>18</sup> C.E. Shoichet, M. Pearson, H. Yan, *Obama, Merkel pledge alliance on Ukraine*, <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/02/09/europe/ukraine-conflict/index.html> (23.06.2018).

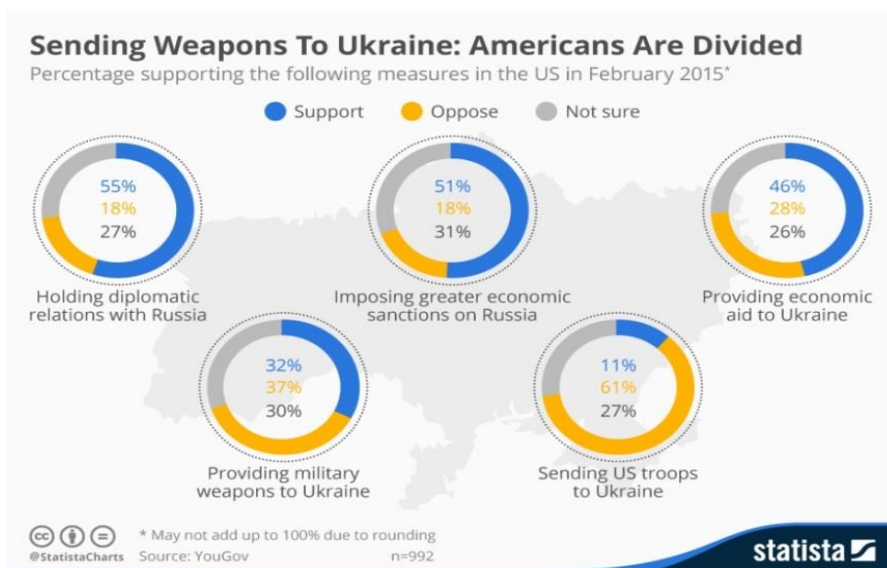
<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> *Barack Obama: USA sz z Ukrainą w obliczu rosyjskiej agresji*, <http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/swiat/barack-obama-usa-sa-z-ukraina-w-obliczu-rosyjskiej-agresji/fxjxz2> (23.06.2018).



Picture 1. Disproportion of forces between Ukraine and Russia

Source: New York Daily News, *Russia sets sights on Ukraine warships as U.S. threatens economic punishment, Pentagon suspends military ties*, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/russian-foreign-minister-sergey-lavrov-troops-ukraine-crimea-region-stability-reached-article-1.1708847> (23.06.2018).



Picture 2. The attitude of Americans to sanctions on Russia and the delivery of weapons to Ukraine

Source: N. McCarthy, *Sending Weapons To Ukraine: Americans Are Divided*, <https://www.statista.com/chart/3221/sending-weapons-to-ukraine-americans-are-divided/> (23.06.2018).

US policy towards the Ukrainian issue at some point before the question mark. US presidential elections could change the superpower's approach to the conflict in Ukraine. Donald Trump won the election. The position of the new president regarding Ukraine in the USA is difficult to determine unequivocally.

On the one hand, he accuses former President Obama of "soft" policy towards Russia and points out that the annexation of Crimea took place during his presidency<sup>27</sup>. On the other hand, being a presidential candidate, he considered the annexation of the peninsula. And it is currently him that Newsweek accuses a more "soft" approach<sup>28</sup>. The then rhetoric of Donald Trump was against the position of, among others, US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley, who condemned Russian "aggressive actions" during the first appearance in the UN Security Council<sup>29</sup>. Ukrainians have reasons to fear that they will be treated objectively by the United States<sup>30</sup>. Donald Trump's "business" approach to Russian actions and the postulate of improving relations with Moscow created an opportunity to create opinions about him as a "ally" of Putin. In one of his statements, he questioned sending troops to the Crimea<sup>31</sup>.

During the conversation with Bill O'Reilly, President Trump said that "America is not innocent, either," and said he did not know what exactly is happening in Ukraine<sup>32</sup>. If the forces of the separatists are under the control of Russia, the US will surely know about it. Although J. Kerry declared in 2015 that "the US and NATO have long been proving that Russia is actively supporting and arming separatists in the east of Ukraine, which the Kremlin denies"<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> A. Dewan, E. McKirdy, *Trump: Crimea was 'taken' by Russia*, <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/02/15/politics/trump-crimea-russia-twitter-obama/> (24.06.2018).

<sup>28</sup> D. Sharkov, *Merkel to meet Ukraine's Poroshenko after first Trump call*, <http://www.newsweek.com/after-putin-call-merkel-set-meet-ukraines-poroshenko-549978> (24.06.2018).

<sup>29</sup> N. Tompson, *Ukraine: Everything...*, op. cit. (24.06.2018).

<sup>30</sup> P. Petersen, *Ukraine and Belarus in Russian New Generation Warfare*, <http://www.thepotomacfoundation.org/ukraine-and-belarus-in-russian-new-generation-warfare/#more-943> (26.06.2018).

<sup>31</sup> *Donald Trump on Ukraine*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GjpGfjzheeo> (24.06.2018).

<sup>32</sup> M. Kolanko, *Trump o walkach na wschodniej Ukrainie: Nie wiemy dokładnie, co to jest*, <http://300polityka.pl/usa2016/2017/02/07/trump-o-walkach-na-wschodniej-ukrainie-nie-wiemy-dokladnie-co-to-jest/> (24.06.2018).

<sup>33</sup> *Wielka Brytania pomoże...*, op. cit. (24.06.2018).

In 2015, an agreement was reached in Minsk<sup>39</sup>, however, it has no effect, just like an earlier ceasefire<sup>40</sup>.

However, the terms of the agreement were not met, which only exacerbated the conflict for the next years<sup>41</sup>. Already earlier (November 20, 2014), Russia and the separatists agreed to a ceasefire. It was to rely on the withdrawal of heavy weapons from battle areas. Despite the lack of consent of the Ukrainian government, the convoy of Russian trucks entered the border area. Russia explains that it is humanitarian aid, which the Kiev authorities did not fully believe. According to the NATO commander in addition to trucks, the border massively crosses weapons and soldiers, thus violating the September ceasefire. Moscow does not admit to the alleged activities. At the end of the year, the UN made it

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<sup>39</sup> "Minsk Agreement" – February 12, 2015 Presidents of Ukraine, Russia and France and the German Chancellor signed a document in Minsk to resolve the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine. One year after the conclusion of the Minsk Agreement is dead, because none of its points has been fully implemented. Although the fighting was stopped on a larger scale, full suspension and withdrawal of heavy weapons from the buffer zone never took place. The political conditions that were to enable the reintegration of the Donetsk region actually controlled by Russia with the rest of Ukraine were not implemented. Both parties interpret the main points of the agreement differently. Russia believes that a preliminary condition is the entry into force of the Ukrainian decentralization reform, which will give special status to the part of Donbass, while Ukraine believes that the implementation of the document must be accompanied not only by unconditional and permanent cessation of fire, but also the restoration of Kiev control over the entire Ukrainian-Russian border. The current situation should be considered as a stalemate and the difference of opinions cannot be overcome. At the same time, the escalation of military operations is unlikely, which means that in the foreseeable future the conflict will continue in the current, not frozen state with all the negative consequences for Donbass, the rest of Ukraine and Russia [in:] A. Wilk, T.A. Olszański, W. Górecki, *Minsk Agreement – the year of the game of appearances*, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2016-02-10/porozumienie-minskie-rok-gry-pozorow> (25.06.2018).

<sup>40</sup> "The cease-fire in Ukraine" – on 5 September in Minsk members of the so-called a tripartite contact group (Ukraine, Russia, OSCE) and representatives of the separatists signed a protocol concerned about the ceasefire in eastern Ukraine. The provisions of the agreement were of general nature - they did not prejudge the resolution of the conflict or the stabilization for situation in the east. The cease-fire gives Ukraine time to reorganize the military forces involved in the fighting in the east and to conduct parliamentary elections in October. In turn, for Russia, it was an element of the policy of *small steps* on the way to imposing on the Ukrainian authorities conditions for settling the conflict, which would weaken Ukrainian statehood and the ability to repair the state. The continuation of the military operation by Russia was associated with increasing internal costs (victims among Russian soldiers) and international costs (tightening of Western sanctions). However, in the absence of prospects of achieving its goals through political negotiations, Moscow could decide to escalate military operations to increase pressure on Kyiv and the West supporting him [in:] R. Sadowski, A. Wierzbowska-Miazga, *Ceasefire in eastern Ukraine*, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2014-09-10/zawieszenie-broni-na-wschodzie-ukrainy> (25.06.2018).

<sup>41</sup> N. Tompson, *Ukraine: Everything...*, op. cit. (25.06.2018).



known that over 1.7 million children live in extremely difficult winter conditions as a result of war damage. In addition, he states that the ceasefire is still being broken. However, the number of victims given in early March 2017 was about 9,500 people, the number of injured reached 2,210 people at that time<sup>42</sup>.

According to Global Security, apart from the difference in strength, there is also a difference in views regarding the rights to particular territories. President Putin explains that circuits: Donetsk, Lugansk, Kharkov is part of the ancient Novorossia. He points out that these areas were transferred to Ukraine in 1920 by the Soviets<sup>43</sup>. He suggests in this way that he regained what is due to Russia because of the policy of Ukraine, which is treason in his eyes. According to President Putin and many Russians, Ukraine is not a separate state, and the Ukrainians themselves are "brothers" for the Russians<sup>44</sup>. This means that Ukrainians are only part of the larger Russian world. Despite the tense situation, Ukraine did not make such a mistake as Georgia and did not let itself be provoked. Thanks to this, the USA can support it in accordance with international law.

There are also differences in media coverage, which is noticed, among others, The Nation and The Daily Signal. False information is the main tool of the Kremlin aimed at weakening the structures of the West<sup>45</sup>. The Kremlin uses freedom and democracies against states that defend those values<sup>46</sup>. According to The Nation, the American and other Western media present a fairly uniform attitude to the conflict by condemning Russia<sup>47</sup>.

Noteworthy is the sensitivity of American society to respect for human rights and the attitude to civilian victims of armed conflicts. The Americans are again beginning to perceive Russia as a hostile country, as shown in picture 3.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

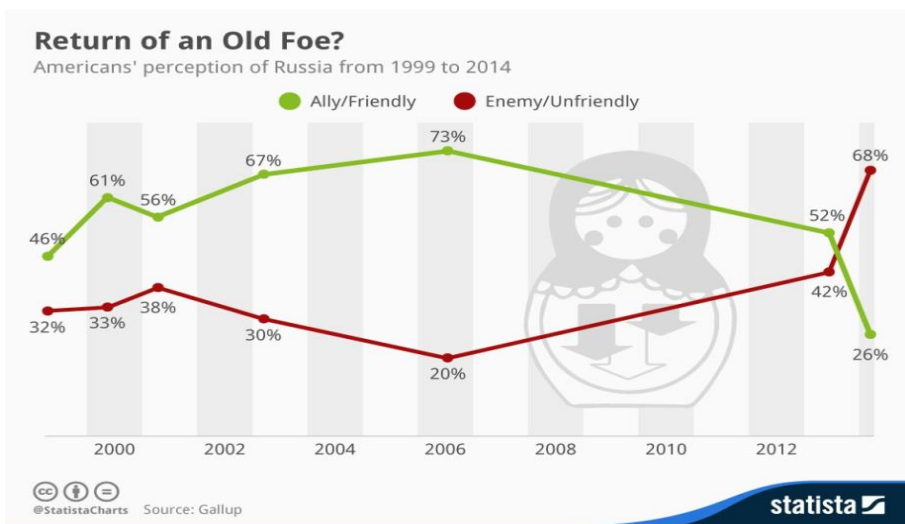
<sup>43</sup> *Ukraine Crisis - Russian Military Intervention*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/ukraine/politics-2014.htm> (25.06.2018).

<sup>44</sup> P. Dickinson, *Putin Is a Prisoner of His Own Hybrid War*, <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/putin-is-a-prisoner-of-his-own-hybrid-war> (25.06.2018).

<sup>45</sup> N. Peterson, *In Ukraine, Russia Weaponizes Fake News to Fight a Real War*, <http://dailysignal.com/2017/03/30/in-ukraine-russia-weaponizes-fake-news-to-fight-a-real-war/> (25.06.2018).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> G. Doctorow, *How the US and Russian Media Are Covering the Ukrainian Crisis*, <https://www.thenation.com/article/how-us-and-russian-media-are-covering-ukrainian-crisis/> (25.06.2018).



Picture 2. The attitude of Americans to Russia

Source: N. McCarthy, *Return of an Old Foe?*, <https://www.statista.com/chart/2070/americans-perception-of-russia/> (25.06.2018).

In turn, the Atlantic Council in one of its publications reports that President Putin has initiated a hybrid war, which he has no chance of winning. He became a "prisoner" in the game, which he intends to continue until he meets with the effective response of the democratic world (the Western world). President Putin's actions are called in his publication his "secret war" on which everyone is losing. The author of the mentioned publication, Peter Dickinson, is of the opinion that Putin will not withdraw from Donbas, among others due to the evidence of Russian crimes committed on that territory (mass graves, torture chambers)<sup>48</sup>.

Therefore, in order not to lose a key ally in the form of the USA, Ukraine is trying to expand contacts with people from the Trump administration. The White House, trying to avoid explicitly advocating belonging to the Crimea, provides for its intentions to restore peace on the eastern border<sup>49</sup>.

Currently, in agreement with Warsaw, Washington provides Ukraine with energy support, which may turn out to be next to military support, decisive for

<sup>48</sup> P. Dickinson, *Putin Is a Prisoner...*, op. cit. (25.06.2018).

<sup>49</sup> *What has President Trump said about your country in his first 100 days?*, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-39732845> (25.06.2018).

the fate of the hybrid war. American gas could be an important element of modernization for the Ukrainian energy market and with Polish support it could be an opportunity to depend on Ukraine's energy security from Russia and the areas occupied by the separatists. It is worth noting that Washington and Warsaw are not significantly susceptible to pressure from Russia<sup>50</sup>.

It is easy to condemn Russian actions, but it is difficult to react properly. Certainly, it is necessary to document and disclose the intentions and activities of the Kremlin<sup>51</sup>. However, one should not count on the resolution of the conflict in Ukraine by the United States. These are distant countries, and Ukraine itself is not the only state threatened. Russia carefully uses both Ukraine and Syria as two frozen conflicts to create obstacles for the White House. In this way, he makes a "painful compromise" from Ukraine<sup>52</sup>. Until the Kremlin changes its attitude, conflict resolution will not be possible<sup>53</sup>. Despite the obstacles, the President of the United States declares that he will not abolish sanctions if the provisions of Minsk 2 are not fulfilled and he will not stop supporting Ukraine. The United States can only help Ukraine, but it does not relieve the Russian or Ukrainian authorities in resolving the conflict. Two solutions are now clarifying. In the first US and its allies will be pursuing an increasingly aggressive policy towards Russia which may seek mutual losses. The second option is the attempt to create a neutral Ukraine that does not threaten Russia<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>50</sup> P. Maciążek, *Wsparcie energetyczne Waszyngtonu i Warszawy decydujące dla wyniku wojny na Ukrainie*, <http://www.energetyka24.com/475666,wsparcie-energetyczne-waszyngtonu-i-warszawy-decydujace-dla-wyniku-wojny-na-ukrainie> (25.06.2018).

<sup>51</sup> M. Boot, *How to Wage Hybrid War on the Kremlin*, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/12/13/how-to-wage-hybrid-war-on-the-kremlin/> (25.06.2018).

<sup>52</sup> I. Webb, *The road to power in Ukraine runs through Donald Trump*, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/24/the-road-to-power-in-ukraine-runs-through-donald-trump/> (25.06.2018).

<sup>53</sup> V.L. Morelli, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33460.pdf> (25.06.2018).

<sup>54</sup> J.J. Mearsheimer, *Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault*, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault> (25.06.2018).

## The position of the Polish authorities to the hybrid war between Russia and Ukraine

The former head of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Witold Waszczykowski, assured that "It is in the interest of Poland to support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine"<sup>55</sup>. Meanwhile at this time, deputy head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Marek Ziółkowski was concerned about the humanitarian situation prevailing in the region of the conflict. He appealed to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, stating that this conflict "must be resolved and cannot be frozen"<sup>56</sup>. The meeting was also attended by experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Chancellery of the President and BBN. The previous head of the Defense Ministry, Tomasz Siemoniak, did not plan to deliver weapons to Ukraine, he suggested focusing on the agreement in Minsk, which finally did not bring any results<sup>57</sup>. In Warsaw, policy towards Ukraine was treated as a priority, as evidenced by the number of visits of representatives of Polish diplomacy in Kiev, despite the fact that no visits were held during the entire 2014 with Prime Ministers Donald Tusk and Ewa Kopacz, and also without President Komorowski<sup>58</sup>. Considering the number of visits, it can be stated that in 2014 Ukraine was the most important issue for Poland<sup>59</sup>. The current Polish President - Andrzej Duda - during his visit to Ukraine presented the vision of the "Tri-Sea" pact<sup>60</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> „Widać, jaka gigantyczna walka się w panu toczy pomiędzy dobrym dyplomatą a politykiem”. *Opozycja o Waszczykowskim*, <https://www.tvp.info/23806782/widac-jaka-gigantyczna-walka-sie-w-panu-toczy-pomiedzy-dobrym-dyplomata-a-politykiem-opozycja-o-waszczykowskim> (20.06.2018).

<sup>56</sup> *W MSZ o rozwiązaniu konfliktu na Ukrainie*, [http://msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka\\_zagraniczna/polityka\\_wschodnia/w\\_msz\\_o\\_rozwiazaniu\\_konfliktu\\_na\\_ukrainie\\_polityka\\_wschodnia;jsessionid=5FF4212EEE90B0F00AE50FCD574A8CAE.cmsap6p](http://msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka_zagraniczna/polityka_wschodnia/w_msz_o_rozwiazaniu_konfliktu_na_ukrainie_polityka_wschodnia;jsessionid=5FF4212EEE90B0F00AE50FCD574A8CAE.cmsap6p) (20.06.2018).

<sup>57</sup> *Otwarta interwencja Rosji na Ukrainie w kwietniu? Szef MON: silne pogłoski*, <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/siemoniak-o-wojnie-na-ukrainie,521532.html> (20.06.2018).

<sup>58</sup> A. Kowalczyk, *Polityka Polski wobec Ukrainy w 2014 r. – próba bilansu*, <http://www.geopolityka.org/analizy/adam-kowalczyk-polityka-polski-wobec-ukrainy-w-2014-r-proba-bilansu> (20.06.2018).

<sup>59</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>60</sup> O. Górzniński, *Wizyta prezydenta Polski na Ukrainie. Duda przedstawił ambitną wizję geopolityki, chce silnego paktu państw "Trójmorza"*, <http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/wizyta-prezydenta-polski-na-ukrainie-duda-przedstawil-ambitna-wizje-geopolityki-chce-silnego-paktu-panstw-trojmorza-6029524008985217a> (20.06.2018).

Polish involvement in the conflict is a result from the assumptions of its foreign policy, which consists in strengthening Ukraine's independence and supporting Western policy, including that Russia will not return to imperialism<sup>61</sup>. Despite the willingness to help and the common goal, Poles also face obstacles in the warming of relations with the inhabitants of Ukraine. For example, the adopted resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland specifying the events in Volhynia from the 1940s as genocide has had a major impact on Polish-Ukrainian relations. To avoid foreign policy mistakes harmful to both sides, communication is necessary and cooperation in many apolitical projects<sup>62</sup>. Russia is trying to thwart such efforts, by conducting provocations in the territories of both Poland and Ukraine<sup>63</sup>. To thwart them, it is necessary to mobilize the societies of both countries and consolidate their interests. What is also needed is an open dialogue, thanks to which it is possible to defend positions in common interests (eg fighting the "Nord Stream 2" gas pipeline) and forbearance where interests do not coincide, including benefits for both parties<sup>64</sup>. Ukraine is supported by Poland in the conflict in various ways. Poland participates in training missions for the Ukrainian army. Moreover, it supports financially and organizationally in fight with corruption and advises in issues considered with developing state administration<sup>65</sup>.

"You have to talk with Russia confidently from the position of strength, but at the same time in a spirit of partnership, that is why the great European unity is so important" - said the vice-president of the European Parliament<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> R. Zięba, *Ukraina jako przedmiot rywalizacji między Zachodem a Rosją*, <http://ssp.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ssp-2015-3-005.pdf> (20.06.2018).

<sup>62</sup> A. Lelonek, *Główne błędy polskiej polityki zagranicznej wobec Ukrainy*, [https://pulaski.pl/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Pulaski\\_Policy\\_Papers\\_Nr\\_24\\_16.pdf](https://pulaski.pl/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Pulaski_Policy_Papers_Nr_24_16.pdf) (20.06.2018).

<sup>63</sup> *Kto podżega do konfliktu Polaków i Ukraińców*, <http://kresy24.pl/kto-podzega-do-konfliktu-polakow-i-ukraincow/> (20.06.2018).

<sup>64</sup> J. Mahda, *Realne odpowiedzi na hybrydowe wyzwania*, <http://wschodnik.pl/publicystyka/item/11163-realne-odpowiedzi-na-hybrydowe-wyzwania-jewhen-mahda.html> (21.06.2018).

<sup>65</sup> *Projekty administracji rządowej w 2017 r.*, <https://polskapomoc.gov.pl/Projekty,administracji,rzadowej,w,2017,r.,2612.html> (21.06.2018).

<sup>66</sup> *Parlament Europejski wezwał Merkel do zajęcia stanowczego stanowiska w sprawie Ukrainy podczas spotkania z Putinem*, <http://wschodnik.pl/polityka/item/11337-parlament-europejski-wezwal-merkel-do-zajecia-stanowczego-stanowiska-w-sprawie-ukrainy-podczas-spotkania-z-putinem.html> (21.06.2018).

## Polish public opinion on the hybrid war between Russia and Ukraine

The University of Warsaw Mediation Research Laboratory has conducted a series of studies on the response of Polish society to events in Ukraine. One of such studies was the analysis of press editorial texts devoted to events in the Crimea and published in February and March 2014. Selected newspapers included "Rzeczpospolita", "Gazeta Wyborcza", "W sieci" and others.

In the above analysis, it was noticed that more attention was paid to the victory of Russia and successive hegemony of President Putin than to the Ukrainian victim. The report's description highlights the marginalization of Poland's role and significance for the conflict in question. The analysis showed that describing events in the Crimea in the journalistic texts under review has a homogeneous character (it concerns most of the political aspect of the conflict). According to research, 76% of publications concerned political aspects, 15% touched on topics related to the society, 6% were devoted to the economic sphere and 3% to the military. Most columnists do not anticipate Ukraine to end the conflict<sup>67</sup>.

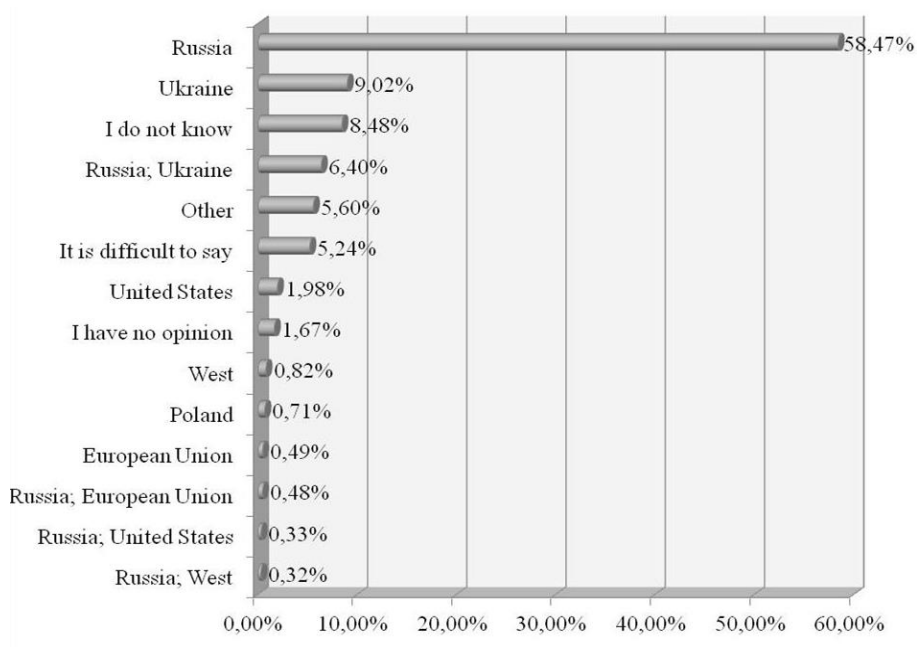
According to a survey of the Laboratory of Media Research at the University of Warsaw, the majority of Poles think that Russia is guilty of conflict in Ukraine<sup>68</sup>. The results of the research are shown on picture number 4.

A study was also carried out regarding the forecast of the duration of the conflict, according to the Poles. In their opinion, the conflict in Ukraine will not end so quickly. The results are presented on picture number 5.

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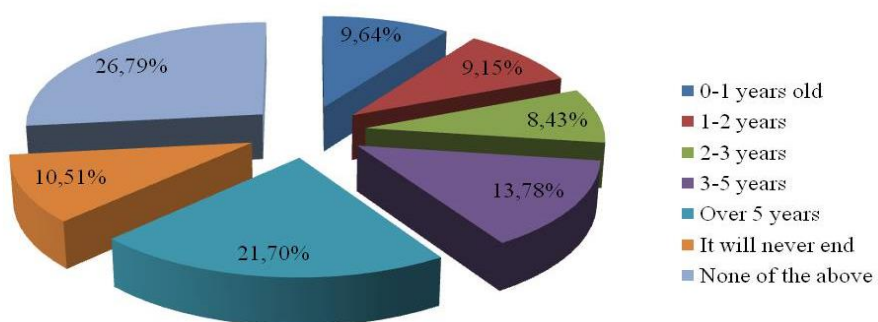
<sup>67</sup> K. Brylska, T. Gackowski, Ł. Szurmiński, *Wydarzenia na Krymie w polskich gazetach i czasopismach w lutym i marcu 2014 r.*, <http://www.lbm.uw.edu.pl/8-aktualnosci/65-raport-krym> (21.06.2018).

<sup>68</sup> *Polacy o wojnie na Ukrainie*, <http://www.uw.edu.pl/polacy-o-wojnie-na-ukrainie/> (21.06.2018).



Picture 4. Who is responsible for the conflict in Ukraine

Own elaboration based on: K. Brylska, T. Gackowski, *What do Poles think about the conflict in Ukraine? The results of the University of Warsaw survey*, <http://www.lbm.uw.edu.pl/8-aktualnosci/110-co-polacy-sadza-o-konflikcie-na-ukrainie-wyniki-sondazu-university-warszawskiego> (21.06.2018 ).



Picture 5. How long will the conflict in Ukraine last?

Own elaboration based on: <http://www.lbm.uw.edu.pl/8-aktualnosci/110-co-polacy-sadza-o-konflikcie-na-ukrainie-wyniki-sondazu-university-warszawskiego> (21.06.2018 ).

The University of Warsaw Mediation Research Laboratory also conducted research on the reactions of people in different age groups to "memes" with the image of President Putin. One of the respondents pointed out that only face of the current President of Russia is not really frightening, but only in the context of the actions he undertakes<sup>69</sup>.

Moreover, the President of Russia conducted manipulation in all areas of social life<sup>70</sup>. In February 2015, the sobaka.ru service published the opinions of a former employee of one of the Russian "media agencies", whose task was to publish false information on the Internet and manipulate facts regarding to the Ukrainian conflict<sup>71</sup>. Russia also creates information based on fake sources, e.g. "Rossija 1", referring to information provided by the so-called Cyber-Berkut<sup>72</sup>.

## Conclusions

To sum up the views of the United States and Poland on the conflict in Ukraine, author states that there is a clear difference in the degree of interest in this region of Europe. The US does not want to give away a sovereign state for free, but the rhetoric of the current president is unstable. On the other side Poland is one of the most involved states in the conflict. The war in the media and cyberspace also undermines Polish interests. The authorities also recognized that this was the right time to settle history in the case of Ukraine. The NATO Summit in Warsaw did not turn out to be revolutionary in terms of Western policy towards Ukraine. Despite some inconsistencies on some issues, Poland intends to continue to support Ukraine in its fight for territorial integrity.

At the end of research, author thinks that the United States and Poland do not intend to change their position towards the war in Ukraine and continue

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<sup>69</sup> K. Brylska, T. Gackowski, M. Patera, D. Sidyk, A. Siwek, *Konflikt na Ukrainie oczami Polaków – jak patrzą i co widzą w memach?*, <http://www.lbm.uw.edu.pl/attachments/article/123/Konflikt%20na%20Ukrainie%20oczami%20Polak%C3%B3w%E2%80%93jak%20patr%C4%85%20i%20co%20widz%C4%85%20w%20memach.pdf>

<sup>70</sup> O. Wasiuta, S. Wasiuta, *Rosyjska mass-medialna manipulacja informacją w wojnie hybrydowej przeciwko Ukrainie*, [http://kultura-bezpieczenstwa.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/KB\\_20\\_332-357.pdf](http://kultura-bezpieczenstwa.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/KB_20_332-357.pdf) (21.06.2018).

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> J. Hajduk, T. Stępniewski, *Wojna hybrydowa Rosji z Ukrainą: uwarunkowania i instrumenty*, [http://www.ce.uw.edu.pl/pliki/pw/4-2015\\_hajduk.pdf](http://www.ce.uw.edu.pl/pliki/pw/4-2015_hajduk.pdf) (21.06.2018)



to support it. However, they do not have enough influence to end military operations and enforce international law. These countries wish Ukraine good luck in further fighting for its territory and sovereignty.

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