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THE ROLE OF THE NGO "UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION OF PUBLISHERS AND BOOK DISTRIBUTORS" IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PUBLISHING

РОЛЬ ГО «УКРАЇНСЬКА АСОЦІАЦІЯ ВИДАВЦІВ ТА КНИГОРОЗПОВСЮДЖУВАЧІВ» У РОЗБУДОВІ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ ВИДАВНИЧОЇ СПРАВИ

Abstract. The publishing industry in Ukraine has been in a state of crisis for several years, characterized by a sharp decline in book production and a decreasing level of readership among the population. One of the two regulatory forces that can influence and potentially improve the state of the industry is civil associations. This article explores the impact of the Ukrainian Publishers and Booksellers Association (UPBA), the leading professional civic association in Ukraine, on the national publishing sector.

The role of civic organizations in the publishing field remains insufficiently studied in Ukrainian scholarship, with references to such activities being mostly fragmented and general. There is a lack of research focusing on the specific role of individual civic associations in the development of the industry.

The aim of this research is to analyze the influence of UPBA on the publishing sector. The main objectives include identifying the contributions of both individual members and the association itself to the industry, determining the forms of interaction with the state on issues of industry development, evaluating the effectiveness of UPBA's core areas of activity — representation of industry interests, promotion of reading, support for professional education, and anti-piracy efforts — and assessing the association's role in advancing the Ukrainian publishing industry abroad.

The methodological basis of the research includes source analysis using general scientific methods of analysis, synthesis, interpretation, and generalization. Content analysis of official publications, media resources, and regulatory documents was employed to evaluate the effectiveness of UPBA's activities in key areas.

The scientific novelty lies in the comprehensive assessment of the role of a civil association — exemplified by UPBA — as a regulatory factor influencing transformations in the publishing industry.

The conducted research reveals that UPBA's current influence on the publishing sector is limited, as the industry requires state financial support to implement existing legal frameworks. Without state intervention, the resources of publishers, libraries, and other stakeholders remain insufficient to bring about large-scale changes capable of reversing the industry's crisis. Even so, UPBA's active engagement has led to positive developments in legislative initiatives, professional education, legal support for publishers, and cooperation with international publishing bodies. What's more, individual members have implemented book-related and charitable projects aimed at supporting the industry and broader society.

The study also emphasizes the need for greater cooperation between the state and civic associations to improve the overall condition of the publishing industry.

Keywords: publishing industry, book publishing, civilian publishing associations, Ukrainian Publishers and Booksellers Association, UPBA.

Анотація. Видавнича справа України в котрий рік перебуває у стані кризи, спостерігається стрімке скорочення обсягів книжкового виробництва, а рівень читання серед населення знижується. Одним з двох регуляторів, які мають вплив на видавничу галузь, а, відповідно, можуть покращити стан галузі, є громадські об'єднання. У статті пропонується розглянути вплив на видавничу справу громадського об'єднання Української асоціації видавців та книготорговців, як провідного фахового громадського об'єднання України.

Ступінь вивченості ролі громадських організацій у видавничій сфері не є достатньо розвинутих в українській науці, оскільки діяльність громадських організацій згадується у працях фрагментарно та у загальних рисах, а праці з дослідженням ролі конкретних громадських об'єднань у розвитку галузі відсутні.

Метою дослідження є аналіз впливу на видавничу галузь Української асоціації видавців та книготорговців (далі — УАВК). Основними завданнями дослідження було визначити внесок у видавничу справу як окремих членів УАВК, так і з боку самої організації, визначити форми взаємодії з державою у питаннях розвитку галузі, проаналізувати ефективність ключових напрямків УАВК у представництві інтересів галузі, популяризації читання, підтримці розвитку професійної освіти та антипіратській діяльності, а також з'ясувати роль асоціації у просуванні видавничої галузі України за кордоном.

Методологічною основою став джерелознавчий аналіз, який спирався на загальнонаукові методи аналізу, синтезу, інтерпретації та узагальнення. Для дослідження було застосовано контент-аналіз офіційних публікацій, медіаресурсів та нормативно-правових актів, що дозволяє оцінити ефективність діяльності УАВК у ключових аспектах її роботи.

Наукова новизна полягає у комплексному осмисленні ролі громадського об'єднання на прикладі провідної видавничої асоціації, УАВК, як регулятора впливу на трансформації у видавничій галузі.

Проведене дослідження визначає, що наразі вплив УАВК на видавничу галузь є мінімізованим, оскільки видавнича галузь потребує державної фінансової підтримки для реалізації наявних нормативно правових актів, без якої ресурси видавців, бібліотек та інших гравців галузі є обмеженими та не можуть принести масштабних змін, здатних змінити кризову ситуацію галузі. Втім, завдяки активній роботі УАВК є позитивні зрушення у видавничій галузі щодо законодавчої сфери, сфері професійної видавничої освіти, консультаційної та правової підтримки видавців, взаємодії з міжнародними видавничими організаціями та партнерами, а завдяки індивідуальним зусиллям членів реалізуються книжкові та благодійні проекти, спрямовані на підтримку галузі та суспільства.

Зроблено також висновок, про необхідність взаємодії держави та громадських об'єднань у підтримці видавничої галузі для досягнення покращення її стану.

Ключові слова: видавнича галузь, книговидавництво, видавничі громадські об'єднання, Українська асоціація видавців та книгорозповсюджувачів, УАВК.

Introduction. The book plays a fundamental role in the education of citizens, scientific progress, and technological breakthroughs, as it has been the primary carrier of information since ancient times. At the same time, the state of the publishing industry in Ukraine has remained stagnant throughout the years of independence. The key issue lies in the existence of a large number of regulatory legal acts intended to support the sector, which, however, are not implemented due to a lack of funding. This unresolved problem has led to several negative consequences: lack of financial support for libraries has resulted in outdated collections that are not replenished, a shortage of books, and insufficient copyright protection has contributed to the flourishing of piracy. Furthermore, economic instability in the country has reduced citizens' purchasing power and interest in reading. The quantity of printed publications continues to decline, their quality deteriorates, and production costs increase.

The financial position of the sector is largely based on the publishers' own working capital [2], and each new economic challenge threatens their survival. For comparison, in European Union countries there is a minimum threshold of 2.5 books published per capita, while in Ukraine this figure ranges from 0.4 to 1.6 books [1, p. 11]. This situation is critical not only for the development of the publishing industry itself but also for the country's overall progress, as a reading population is generally more educated, creative, and contributes significantly to the scientific and technological spheres, thereby fostering development across all elements of state functioning.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to study the entities that influence Ukraine's publishing industry, the forms and methods by which this influence is exerted, and to assess the effectiveness of such impact.

The main regulators of the publishing industry in Ukraine are the state, which formulates policy and adopts legislation, and civil society, represented by various professional associations, unions, and organizations that act as direct representatives of the publishing business.

The role of the state in supporting the development of the national publishing industry is defined by law, particularly in the Law of Ukraine "On State Support for Book Publishing in Ukraine." Forms of state support include financial aid, tax benefits, promotion of translation activities, publication of inclusive literature, and the promotion of Ukrainian books in international markets.

Simultaneously, professional public associations collaborate with the state in shaping publishing policy, lobbying legislative initiatives, developing strategic directions for the publishing industry, initiating and implementing projects to support national book production, and engaging in professional training and development.

Given the long-standing negative state of the publishing sector in Ukraine, it is crucial to assess the impact of its regulators, evaluate their effectiveness, and identify ways to improve their strategic approach.

Certain aspects of these issues have been addressed by several domestic scholars, including O. Afonin, M. Senchenko, V. Bebyk, M. Tymoshyk, V. Karpenko, Yu. Bondar, M. Zhenchenko, T. Krainikova, T. Vodolazka, V. Shpak, H. Hlotova, H. Hret, V. Ivanov, V. Karpenko, I. Krupskyi, V. Zdorovega, V. Ivanov, V. Karpenko, N. Konovalenko, and others.

General issues of the influence of public associations on a policymaking across various sectors have been studied by I. Svystun, S. Lizakovska, Y. Vozniuk, K. Zakharenko, I. Magnovskyi, M. Tokar, V. Kalynovska, among others.

Despite the fact that the analysis of existing research provides a foundation for identifying the impact of specific regulators from civil society organizations on the publishing industry, such studies remain fragmented. The need to further develop this topic is also reinforced by the absence of any comprehensive research in Ukrainian scholarship that would offer a holistic analysis of the influence of a specific public association on the sector. This gap determined the topic, aim, and objectives of the present study.

This research aims to examine the influence of public associations on the publishing sector. Although the official register of civil society organizations in Ukraine is currently inaccessible due to martial law, recent data identify several of the most active and recognized organizations in the publishing professional sphere. These include the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine, the National Union of Writers of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Publishers and Booksellers Association (UPBA), the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine, and the public organization "Detector Media." Each of these associations has its own approach and specific influence on the publishing field. However, this study focuses exclusively on UPBA, as it is considered the leading professional publishing organization in Ukraine.

The aim of this study is to assess the influence of UPBA on the development of the publishing sector in Ukraine. To achieve this aim, the following objectives are proposed:

To identify both the individual and collective contributions of UPBA members to the development of the industry;

To examine the principles and forms of interaction between UPBA and governmental authorities in shaping national publishing policy;

To analyze the effectiveness of the association's key areas of activity, including advocacy for the industry, promotion of reading, support for professional publishing education, and anti-piracy initiatives;

To determine the association's role in promoting the Ukrainian publishing sector through international initiatives and cooperation with foreign partners.

Methodology. The methodological foundation of this study consists of general scientific methods of analysis, synthesis, interpretation, and generalization. The content analysis of official publications, media resources, and legal acts was applied to assess the effectiveness of UPBA in the key aspects of its work.

The social-communication approach provided an opportunity to study the activities of UPBA in the context of its interaction with governmental structures, participants in the publishing market, and readers. The evaluation of communication processes and their influence on social relations between these entities allows for a better understanding of the association's role as a vital intermediary in the national publishing market.

The axiological approach was employed to identify the value orientations of UPBA and evaluate its contribution to shaping public opinion about

books and reading. This approach enabled an assessment not only of the association's tangible achievements but also its impact on the cultural context, the role of books in society, and the changes in reading approaches in the face of modern challenges.

Results and discussion. The Ukrainian Publishers and Booksellers Association (UPBA) is one of the most authoritative professional organizations in Ukraine's publishing sector [14, p. 110], created "to ensure activity in the interests of developing the publishing and book distribution industry and the distribution of periodical and electronic publications in Ukraine" [19, p. 2].

The primary goal and task of UPBA, as defined in its statute, is "creating favorable conditions for the effective activity of the publishing sector in Ukraine, enhancing the role of Ukrainian books in shaping national self-consciousness, and contributing to the moral, cultural, and intellectual development of the Ukrainian nation, promoting literacy and reading in Ukraine and abroad, protecting copyright and related rights, satisfying and protecting the rights, social, economic, business, creative, and other legal interests of the participants (members) of the association, as well as fostering communication and experience exchange" [19, p. 2]. In other words, UPBA aims to have a positive influence on the publishing industry in various aspects.

According to UPBA's statute, its activities cover a broad range of areas, including legal support, popularization of national publishing, interaction with governmental structures, and international partners.

The association was first registered by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on June 17, 1994, as the Charitable Organization "Ukrainian Association of Non-Governmental Publishers", initiated by the general director of the "Abris" publishing house, Yuriy Prylyuk, who became its first president. After the death of Yuriy Prylyuk in February 1995, the leadership of the association was assumed by Leonid Lazebnyi, the deputy director of the "Osnova" publishing house.

In March 1996, a new president, Oleksandr Afonin, the general director of the humanitarian literature publishing house "Abris", was elected to lead the association. During his presidency, the organization adopted its current name — the "Ukrainian Publishers and Booksellers Association" — in 2000. Afonin stepped down from his leadership position in 2024, and in 2025, Artem Bidenko was elected as the new president. Bidenko is an expert in political communications and marketing, co-author of the

Government's Concept for Promoting and Advancing Ukraine's Interests in the World, and a key figure in launching the national brand UkraineNOW [8].

According to official UPBA sources, the most recent publicly available list of members dates back to 2021 and includes 106 names. However, the official website of the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine states that as of 2025, the association comprises 95 publishing houses and booksellers [7]. Data from the State Register of Publishers, Manufacturers, and Distributors of Publishing Products indicate that over 8,000 entities are registered, of which more than 2,000 are engaged solely in publishing activities. At the same time, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine reports that only 560 publishers are currently operating. In this context, the number of publishers engaged in UPBA's activities appears insufficient, indicating a low level of involvement of publishing entities in professional public representation and limited participation in shaping publishing policy through civil society mechanisms.

A similar situation is observed among professional civil society organizations. According to the most recent data from the Unified State Register of Civic Associations maintained by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, as of November 15, 2022, there were 34,258 registered civic associations, of which only 31 identified themselves as representing the publishing and printing industries. Among the currently active organizations are UPBA, the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine, the National Union of Writers of Ukraine, the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine, and the civic organization "Detector Media". However, researchers note that many civic associations exist only on paper [11, p. 205] and do not currently play an active role in civil society or in supporting the publishing industry. Most organizations that are still formally active — such as the Association of Independent Regional Publishers of Ukraine, the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine, the Commonwealth of Information Publication Workers of Ukraine, and the Ukrainian Guild of Editors — were influential during their early years, but their activities have largely ceased, despite remaining registered in official databases.

UPBA regularly holds board meetings where issues raised by publishers are discussed, and decisions as to the admission of new members or the exclusion of existing ones are made. According to UPBA board meeting

protocols available on the official website, the most common reasons for exclusion include voluntary withdrawal, the termination of activity due to company liquidation, and violations of Article 4, Clause 4.5.3 of UPBA Statute (failure to pay membership fees for over a year). Based on recent meeting records, new publishing houses continue to apply for membership, indicating the potential for expansion and greater diversity of representation within the association.

As of 2025, the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine [7] reports that UPBA Board includes: Tymofii Busel ("PERUN" Publishing House), Serhii Hapiuk (newspaper "Pidruchnyky ta Posibnyky"), Oleh Holovko ("Helvetika" Publishing House), Vladyslav Kyrychenko ("Nash Format" Publishing House), Dmytro Kononenko ("KSD" Publishing House), Mykola Kravchenko ("Nora-Druk" Publishing House), Oleksandr Krasovytskyi ("Folio" Publishing House), Viktor Kruhlov ("Ranok" Publishing House), Yuliia Orlova ("Vivat" Publishing House), Oleksandr Popovych ("Unisoft" Printing House), Mykola Sheiko ("The Old Lion Publishing House"), Artem Bidenko (UPBA President), and Ihor Stepurin ("Samit-Knyha" Publishing House).

In examining the influence of the association on the industry, it is also important to consider the individual impact of its members. For example, publishers such as Oleksandr Krasovytskyi ("Folio"), Vladyslav Kyrychenko ("Nash Format"), Viktor Kruhlov ("Ranok"), and Ihor Stepurin ("Samit-Knyha") are co-founders of the charitable foundation "Library Country" ("Bibliotechna Kraina"), which supports and promotes the development of Ukrainian libraries. According to reports published on the foundation's official platform, from 2015 to 2024, the organization has sent over 100,000 books to more than 500 libraries, developed library-related educational courses completed by nearly 1,500 participants, produced three methodological manuals for librarians, and initiated the development of 50 local library development strategies.

In 2023, the foundation collaborated with the charitable foundation "Toloka" and UPBA to launch a joint initiative called "Book Grants for Libraries of Ukraine". The project was financed through international charitable contributions, including €15,170 from Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels and \$10,000 from Helping Ukrainian Books and Booksellers. The total of 960,000 UAH was used to purchase book sets for 32 libraries whose collections had been damaged or destroyed by war.

A total of 3,650 books were distributed through a transparent supplier selection process.

Also, in 2023, "The Old Lion Publishing House" won the prestigious Bologna Prize for the Best Children's Publishers of the Year in the "Europe" category at the Bologna Book Fair. This international recognition was the result of years of consistent work in the global rights market and promotion of Ukrainian authors and culture abroad. Domestically, the publishing house has repeatedly received top national awards, such as BBC Book of the Year, the Shevchenko National Prize, UNESCO City of Literature Prize, "Book of the Year", "LitAccent of the Year", and awards named after Yurii Shevelov, Hryhorii Skovoroda, and Sholem Aleichem, along with honors from Book Forum and Book Arsenal festivals. Since 2014, the publishing house has held an annual charitable "Garage Sale" and supported various social initiatives such as assistance to rural libraries, pediatric medical institutions, and cooperation with the Tabletochki charity foundation.

In addition to its influence on the publishing sector during the Russian aggression, the involvement of publishing businesses in supporting the country is also a crucial element. A notable example is the publishing house "Ranok", which in 2014 established the charitable foundation "Ranok-Ukraine" to provide systematic support for children, educators, medical workers, and internally displaced persons. According to official reports, the foundation has implemented a number of social projects, including the donation of book sets to the NGO "Union of Large Families", and provided books as gifts for 700 children of servicemen for Saint Nicholas Day. The foundation has also reported the purchase of equipment for the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The publishing house "Vivat", in collaboration with the charitable foundation "Hurkit", launched an initiative to collect waste paper in bookstores across four Ukrainian cities (Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, and Ivano-Frankivsk). The goal was to raise funds for the needs of mobile air defense groups, known as "Jedi of Air Defense". As a result of the campaign, organizers reported in March 2025 the purchase of a vehicle for the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The activities of individual UPBA members demonstrate their strong presence in the publishing arena and their positive contributions to the development of the sector. They also help distinguish Ukrainian publishers on the international stage.

From its inception, UPBA has focused on advocacy and legislative activities, particularly in drafting and lobbying for legislation aimed at supporting publishing infrastructure. This experience has led to a model of representation in which the association's leadership combines analytical, advocacy, and communication functions [9]. As a result of these efforts, several legislative amendments were prepared with UPBA's participation, including changes to the Laws of Ukraine "On Publishing", "On Value Added Tax", and "On Corporate Income Tax". A major success was also the adoption of the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On the Introduction of a Moratorium on the Eviction of Editorial Offices of Print Media, Cultural Institutions (including Libraries), Publishing Houses, Bookstores, and Book Distribution Enterprises".

What's more, UPBA participated in drafting the final documents of the Council of Europe's Warsaw Conference "Legislation in the World of Books" (1996), demonstrating the Ukrainian professional community's ability to contribute to the formulation of strategic European-level documents.

UPBA's involvement in legal advocacy and legislative initiatives has had a significant impact on the development of the Ukrainian publishing sector. The proposed legislative changes improved the legal framework for publishing, created better tax conditions for publishing businesses, preserved critical infrastructure, and affirmed the integration of Ukraine's book industry into the European legal and cultural space. These achievements represent an important step toward the stabilization and further growth of the sector.

On July 7, 2021, UPBA President Oleksandr Afonin participated in a parliamentary hearing on the Reading Development Strategy for 2021–2025, titled "Reading as a Life Strategy". This highlights UPBA's recognized expertise in shaping national cultural and educational policy. For the publishing sector, this participation is significant because it signals greater state support for promoting reading, updating library collections, stimulating demand for Ukrainian books, and introducing mechanisms for public procurement of book products. In the long term, these measures could positively influence both the economic performance of the publishing market and the development of reading culture and educational attainment.

In the context of reducing Ukraine's technological dependence in publishing, a key step was UPBA's agreement with the International ISBN Agency. This fact granted Ukraine its own ISBN prefix, eliminating

the need to use Russian registration codes. It reinforced national information sovereignty and enabled equal participation in the global cultural and economic exchange.

In 2020, the association also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Public Council for Culture, Youth, and Sports of Ukraine. The memorandum aims to consolidate efforts in implementing cultural policy, improving legislation, and promoting youth development based on strong moral and ethical values. This initiative demonstrates UPBA's aspiration to broaden its scope of activity — from a narrowly professional focus to a more holistic engagement in cultural and educational development.

In the context of UPBA's involvement in the development of publishing education, it is worth mentioning the signing of a memorandum of cooperation on June 2, 2017, between UPBA and the Institute of Journalism at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University [6]. Within the framework of this agreement, meetings with students and roundtable discussions are organized, during which publishers share their professional experience, discuss the state of the Ukrainian publishing market, and engage in dialogue with students [5, 4, 3]. As well, the former UPBA President, Oleksandr Afonin, served as a reviewer for several educational programs at the university, demonstrating the association's interest in the quality and development of professional publishing education.

Given that publishing activities are closely linked to the use of intellectual property objects, appropriate legal regulation significantly affects the operation of publishing houses. According to the World Intellectual Property Organization, the author of a work is the primary copyright holder. In certain cases, such as the creation of dictionaries or encyclopedias involving multiple contributors, copyright may belong to the publisher. What's more, copyrights may be held by an employer if the work was created within the author's professional duties. If the author transfers copyright to a publisher, they may no longer publish the work independently, even if they possess the manuscript [12, p. 15].

On one hand, publishing entities are obligated to comply with intellectual property laws to avoid infringing on the rights of third parties. On the other hand, publishers themselves frequently face violations of their own rights, particularly copyrights. According to the "Final Report 2020. The Publishing Industry in Ukraine: Research Results", prepared by the Ukrainian Book Institute for the British Council, 8 % of respondents identified piracy and copyright infringement as among the most serious

challenges facing the publishing industry [13, p. 35]. The most common infringements included unauthorized distribution of content and illegal importation of printed materials into Ukraine. Respondents unanimously stated that the piracy problem has worsened since 2017 [13, p. 35].

In response to these challenges, a government-led interagency group to combat piracy in the book industry was established in March 2021 with the participation of UPBA, under the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine. This group also included representatives of fiscal and law enforcement agencies. However, despite the societal relevance of this initiative, its practical impact was limited: the group's activities remained largely consultative and did not lead to significant progress in protecting copyright. This fact shows the need for increased engagement by state institutions and improved interagency coordination.

Analysis of the available data suggests the presence of serious issues in the area of intellectual property protection. These problems likely stem from both legislative shortcomings and weak enforcement mechanisms. As such, there is an objective need to improve the legal framework governing intellectual property, particularly in the area of anti-piracy efforts, as well as to reform customs legislation to better protect relevant rights.

It is important to note that combating piracy is an important element in supporting and protecting Ukrainian book publishing, which, at the same time, is only a part of the broader issue — namely, the lack of adequate government funding for the publishing industry. Accordingly, unless this issue is addressed, even targeted attempts to resolve the problem of piracy in the sector will be insufficiently effective and may only bring temporary relief. Considering the long-term prospects of the Ukrainian publishing sector, such strategies alone will not be enough to significantly help or elevate the industry to a prosperous level.

The official website of UPBA offers a service under the "Copyright" section, where publishers and authors can request online consultations or review contract samples. These links redirect users to the website of private entrepreneur Volodymyr Konovalenko, "Territory of Intellectual Capitalism", where a list of services and prices is provided. Additionally, during public events and meetings, former UPBA president Oleksandr Afonin emphasized the association's role in providing consulting support to publishers on copyright protection issues. Currently, UPBA's official pages host articles by members addressing copyright infringement [19], yet this activity does not yield concrete results.

Unlike other institutions, UPBA does not disseminate information about its educational efforts in copyright protection. For example, the Ukrainian Book Institute, in collaboration with the Ukrainian National Office for Intellectual Property and Innovation, conducted a series of professional events, including a seminar cycle titled "Protection of Intellectual Property Objects in Publishing" [17], aimed at improving publishers' qualifications for royalties, rights to AI-generated works, legal aspects of creating books in audio and electronic formats, and principles for the distribution of copyright.

In 2022, as part of promoting Ukrainian books and protecting copyright, UPBA released its compiled Copyright Catalogue. This six-volume catalogue includes books from various genres and is distributed with the support of the International Publishers Association (IPA). Its goal is to encourage foreign publishers to acquire rights to Ukrainian works, thereby enhancing their international presence. This initiative has yielded results: in 2022, foreign publishers purchased rights to over 230 Ukrainian books, compared to 120 in 2021 [15].

It should be noted that UPBA is a full member of the IPA, which allows it to participate in global professional discourse and engage in current initiatives related to the freedom of speech, protection of publishers' rights, and advancement of the publishing field amidst challenges and transformations. Formal membership in IPA is accompanied by regular contact and dialogue: in 2022, UPBA became one of the finalists for the "Prix Voltaire" — an international award recognizing courage and resilience in defending freedom in publishing. Although UPBA was not ultimately selected as the winner (the award went to "Same Sky Publishing/Fah Deaw Kan" in Thailand), its involvement as a finalist strengthens the integration of Ukraine's publishing community into the global system and affirms trust in UPBA as a representative partner of Ukraine.

Amids Russia's full-scale invasion, the IPA openly supported the position of the Ukrainian Association and issued a statement of solidarity. In response to UPBA's appeal to intensify sanctions against Russian publishers, the IPA leadership reaffirmed its support, condemned the aggression, and emphasized the humanitarian mission of publishing as a tool for dialogue and peace. This public stance carries significant symbolic and political weight, enabling Ukraine's publishing sector to act as a subject of international advocacy.

Thus, UPBA is not only integrated into the global publishing landscape but also serves as a communicator and initiator of cultural diplomacy, drawing international attention to Ukrainian books and strengthening the role and significance of Ukrainian publishing on the world stage.

Throughout its work, UPBA representatives have participated in over 20 international conferences dedicated to current issues in publishing regulation, the role of books in public life, and the functioning of the book market amid global transformations. This level of participation demonstrates not only a commitment to implementing the best international practices but also Ukraine's contribution to developing shared policies that define publishing as a component of cultural policy. Furthermore, the international engagement of Ukrainian publishers, authors, and translators helps attract foreign partners and investors to support the Ukrainian publishing sector.

UPBA actively cooperates with both Ukrainian state and private institutions. For instance, the Ukrainian Book Institute, a state organization whose mission is to create the organizational, administrative, and cultural conditions necessary to transform domestic publishing into a European-level cultural industry and establish a unified national book market, ensures access to knowledge through Ukrainian books and fosters a reading culture [20]. One of its annual initiatives is the "National Reading Week", held both in Ukraine and abroad, with UPBA serving as a partner and co-organizer of thematic events. In 2024, as part of this initiative, numerous Ukrainian libraries reported hosting literary events, while the Ukrainian Book Institute announced on its official pages the holding of close to 900 events across Ukraine, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Germany, South Korea, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, France, and the United States. According to the Institute, the number of online participants in "National Reading Week" reached 633,000, with a total reach of over 4 million [16].

This activity is particularly important considering the current state of Ukrainian libraries: the number of libraries in Ukraine continues to decline, and a significant proportion of libraries located in small towns and villages operate in buildings that are in disrepair or in urgent need of capital renovation [10]. Moreover, in many libraries, book collections are stored in unsuitable conditions, and the collections themselves fail to meet readers' needs due to outdated materials or a lack of books. As a result of the Russian Federation's military aggression, around 700 libraries have been

affected — some were damaged, destroyed, or ended up under occupation. Therefore, the association's involvement in projects supporting Ukrainian libraries is a pressing need today.

Given the context of war and economic crisis, the figures obtained suggest a high level of public interest in cultural initiatives, as well as effective coordination between state institutions, libraries, publishers, and international partners in promoting reading. UPBA's participation in such projects demonstrates the significant potential of the book sector as an instrument of cultural diplomacy and serves to support societal morale in times of crisis.

UPBA also engages with the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine, which is the main body in the system of central executive authorities responsible for forming and implementing state policy in the media, information, and publishing spheres [21]. For instance, former UPBA president Oleksandr Afonin was a member of the Public Council under the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting, which includes representatives from well-known public organizations active in the media sector. Through this council, UPBA contributed to the legislative process by reviewing draft regulations and proposing amendments to draft laws.

An example of partnership between UPBA members and both public and private entities includes the joint 2022 project of Helvetyka Publishing House and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, titled "Thematic Issues of Ukrainian Scholarly Journals on European Integration". This project enabled the free publication of articles in special editions of professional journals across various disciplines. The presentation of the issues took place on December 2022.

The publishing house "Vivat" partnered with the private tech media company HOLYWATER on a joint contest for Ukrainian authors of the romance genre, aiming to support contemporary literary creativity. Selected authors received an honorarium, exclusive contracts, and monthly royalties, and their works were published in the app "My Passion".

Thus, the Ukrainian publishing industry retains growth potential even under martial law, as publishers continue to participate in new projects and collaborations.

With UPBA's work in analytics and the dissemination of methodological materials, members of the association regularly publish updates on publishing industry issues via UPBA's official platforms and personal

pages. During Oleksandr Afonin's presidency, the "Activity Reports of the Board of the Charitable Organization Ukrainian Association of Publishers and Booksellers" were periodically issued, offering insights into the activities of Ukrainian publishers and their contributions to developing the industry.

UPBA has traditionally acted as an advocate for the industry in its interactions with the government. After the full-scale invasion began, the association appealed to the Prime Minister of Ukraine to ensure uninterrupted power supply to printing houses fulfilling state contracts. UPBA also initiated the recognition of publishing enterprises as critically important to the national economy. As a result, Order No. 435 of the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications dated June 19, 2024, amended the criteria for identifying such enterprises, allowing for the deferral of military conscription for employees involved in book production. This decision has made it possible to preserve human resources in publishing houses and ensure the continuity of production processes during wartime.

Within its humanitarian mission, UPBA actively supports initiatives aimed at promoting Ukrainian literature among military personnel and internally displaced persons. In 2023–2024, UPBA participated in several book donation campaigns, distributing books to the front lines, as well as to libraries and schools affected by the war. Jointly, through its communication platforms, the association highlights initiatives from industry colleagues and partners, including military literature contests that contribute to preserving memory and fostering self-identification. For instance, in 2024, UPBA reported on a military literature contest organized by the International Renaissance Foundation, targeting military personnel and veterans. The contest aimed to support self-expression through writing, receiving 271 submissions across categories such as short stories, essays, diaries, and poems. The best works are slated for inclusion in an anthology to be published by "The Old Lion Publishing House" in 2025.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Security Service of Ukraine, UPBA advocates for strengthening sanctions against Russian book products. The association posits that purchasing books published in the Russian Federation or related to the Russian book market indirectly supports the aggressor state's budget, which funds military actions against Ukraine. Consequently, the commercial distribution of Russian

publications is viewed as economic support for the aggressor state, conflicting with Ukraine's national interests and security policies. In 2024, UPBA repeatedly appealed to the organizers of the Frankfurt Book Fair to exclude Russian participants to prevent sanction breaches and the financing of the aggressor state through cultural commerce. Despite these efforts, five Russian publishing houses, including Exmo, were present at the fair, raising concerns about the efficacy of existing sanctions and the need for more stringent measures.

Under the leadership of its new president, Artem Bidenko, UPBA plans to modernize its internal governance mechanisms. This idea includes developing strategies to enhance the roles of committees and sections and expanding the participation of small and medium-sized publishing enterprises in decision-making processes [8]. According to President Bidenko, these actions are necessary to ensure greater inclusivity in the professional community and to consider the diverse interests of all members. Simultaneously, the new president has indicated plans to focus the association's efforts on building international relations, particularly through engagement with donor organizations, thereby opening new avenues for resource support of strategic initiatives. As these plans require further implementation, analyzing UPBA's future activities under new leadership remains a pertinent topic.

Conclusions. The research achieved its objectives, leading to the conclusion that UPBA exerts a partial and indirect influence on Ukraine's publishing industry. This influence manifests through individual contributions from association members, such as participation in charitable activities supporting Ukrainian libraries and the population, collaborations with partners on joint book projects, and collective efforts by the association in advocacy and legislative activities. UPBA represents the interests of Ukrainian publishers before the state, participating in parliamentary hearings, public council meetings at government bodies, and representing Ukraine's publishing industry abroad through international events, conferences, and fairs.

UPBA collaborates with various state management bodies, enabling it to indirectly influence the development and support of the publishing industry and the formation of state publishing policies. This collaboration occurs through specialized institutions like the Ukrainian Book Institute, the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine, and ministries such as the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications,

the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During these interactions, UPBA, as a member of public councils and parliamentary hearings, proposes amendments to draft laws and conducts expert reviews of draft regulatory legal acts. However, this indirect influence is currently limited, as the state's priorities and the ongoing martial law, which directs many resources toward national recovery and defense, play significant roles in decision-making regarding support for the publishing industry.

UPBA has achieved positive results in several aspects of its activities, such as representing industry interests both domestically and internationally. The association has signed cooperation memorandum with public councils aimed at addressing cultural and publishing industry issues, and has entered into agreements with international agencies to assign Ukraine an international identification code, preventing the further use of Russian registration codes — a move with both technical and symbolic significance in the context of political independence. However, in addressing certain industry problems, such as representing library interests, the association's actions have been less effective. Despite UPBA's and its members' involvement in library development, these efforts are insufficient for significant improvements; the state must actively participate and stimulate the development of libraries and their collections.

Positive changes from the association include its participation in book projects and active involvement of its members in social book initiatives that promote reading among the population — a necessary step to increase public interest in books and reading. Regarding support for professional education development, UPBA collaborates with the Institute of Journalism at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University through cooperation memorandum, developing curricula and conducting meetings and roundtables with students.

At the same time, the effectiveness of the association's protection of copyright remains an open question. Despite UPBA's participation in negotiations with state bodies on this issue, providing legal support to publishers within its competence, and forming copyright catalogs, the association cannot independently overcome piracy in the industry. Addressing this issue requires implementing a state strategy to support the publishing industry, improving legal regulation in the field of intellectual property, reforming customs legislation to effectively protect relevant rights, and active involvement of public associations.

UPBA actively collaborates with the International Publishers Association, the International ISBN Agency, organizers of international book fairs, and foreign partners in implementing charitable projects involving foreign investments to support the industry. This fact contributes to the development of cultural diplomacy and the promotion and support of Ukraine's publishing industry abroad.

Thus, UPBA's activities, as one of the two industry regulators, have yielded positive results in influencing the publishing sector, though these impacts are specific and cannot lead to large-scale changes. Systematic support for the publishing industry in its various aspects also requires active involvement from the second regulator — the state — which must implement selected strategies to support the industry and invest in its development.

The association's influence can grow further by expanding its membership to reflect the number of existing publishers, increasing overall member activity, and continuing systematic interaction with the state in shaping cultural and information policies aimed at developing publishing, reading, and protecting intellectual property amid contemporary challenges.

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