

BRAND
UKRAINE

UKRAINE'S PERCEPTION REPORT IN LATIN AMERICA

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METHODOLOGY

The analysis of Ukraine's perception in Latin America consists of four pillars:

- **Ukraine-related search trends.** What topics and events are capturing public interest in Ukraine on Google.
- **Public opinion about Ukraine.** The general sentiment and perceptions held by the public towards Ukraine, as reflected in trustworthy social surveys.
- **Ukraine's coverage in local news media.** How Ukraine is represented in news outlets, including the most popular Ukraine-related topics.
- **Interviews with five experts per region.** Analysis of opinions from researchers and experts for a deeper understanding of key trends and the context of Ukraine's perception.

Using the insights from Expert interviews, we have been able to further validate our initial findings. Experts' quotes that either supported or challenged findings from preliminary desk-based research are presented in each section of the report in order to provide a deeper understanding of the results.

LIMITATIONS

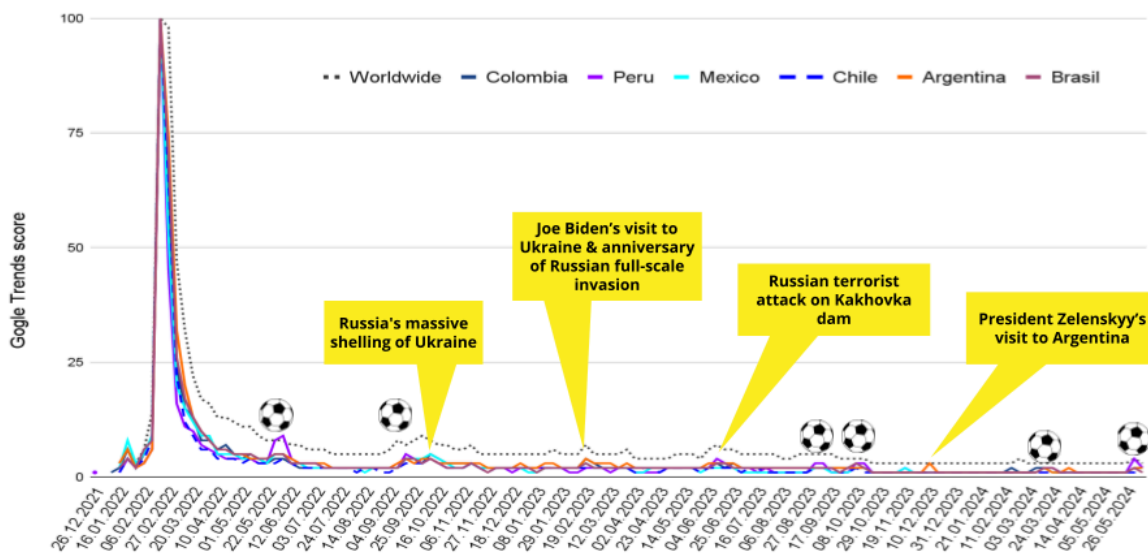
This regional analysis was conducted on a limited number of countries representing Latin America. While we acknowledge that perceptions of Ukraine may vary across different countries within the region, time and resource constraints led us to focus our analysis on the most influential countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru.

Our media analysis was conducted over a specific, limited time frame (from May to July 2024). While a longer time frame could provide additional insights, we believe that the data provided offers a foundational understanding of how Ukraine is covered in local media.

UKRAINE-RELATED SEARCH TRENDS ANALYSIS

To identify the genuine interest of the regional audience in specific topics, we conducted a study of search queries using Google Trends and Ahrefs. Given the distinct functionalities of these analytical tools, we selected different timeframes for query analysis. For Google Trends, the analysis covered January 2022 to May 2024, while for Ahrefs, it spanned June 2023 to June 2024. Both tools provided data for Mexico, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Colombia, and Brazil. This research enabled us to assess the resonance of various events among audiences in the selected countries.

According to our analysis of the data from Ahrefs and Google Trends, the most common reasons for rising search interest over the period of January 2022 - May 2024 in the "Ukraine" topic in Latin America were as following (see Chart 1).



Source: Google Trends

Chart 1. Google Search Trends for "Ukraine" in Latin America & worldwide

Ukraine's involvement in football matches. Throughout Latin America, interest in Ukraine surged due to its national football team's significant matches. One of the interviewed experts highlighted the region's heightened attention to Ukrainian football:

Expert 1: "Of course, there are certain associations. When we asked colleagues what Ukraine meant to them, prior to the war, the first thing they mentioned was Ukrainian football players — especially Andriy Shevchenko. For Latin America, football is like a religion, and naturally, this connection excites them. They often say that if you want to bring Ukraine closer to Latin America, just bring us Shevchenko."

This demonstrates how sports, particularly football, serve as a cultural bridge, fostering interest and positive associations with Ukraine.

4 Ukraine's Perception In Latin America

High-level diplomatic visits. Joe Biden's visit to Ukraine on the anniversary of the Russian full-scale invasion significantly drove attention to the "Ukraine" search query. Similarly, Volodymyr Zelenskyy's visit to Buenos Aires for the inauguration of Argentina's new president, Javier Milei, also raised search activity regarding Ukraine. Experts have repeatedly emphasized the critical role of Ukrainian leaders' physical presence in shaping the perception of Ukraine in the region:

Expert 1: "When Volodymyr Zelensky visited Argentina in December 2023 to meet the new president, Javier Milei, it was undoubtedly a top event."

Expert 2: "In South America, visits work; physical presence works. They don't know us by face, they've never seen us, and they don't trust us. Any physical presence creates resonance."

Expert 3: "There are things Ukraine has never done, and these draw the most attention. For instance, the Ukrainian president's visits to inaugurations of regional leaders."

A Brazilian academic further highlighted the importance of high-level diplomatic visits, suggesting that Zelensky's presence could significantly enhance Ukraine's image in Brazil:

Expert 4: "So I think it would be nice if he [Volodymyr Zelensky] tried to come to Brazil. I know that he has some misunderstandings with President Lula, but I think he would be well received, even in Brazil."

These insights underline how strategic engagement through direct interactions can strengthen Ukraine's visibility and relationships across Latin America.

Russia's war crimes against Ukraine. Humanitarian issues of the ongoing war are heightening concern about Ukraine. Thus, in all the countries of the region, except Argentina, interest in Ukraine has amplified significantly due to Russia's massive missile strikes against Ukraine in October 2022. The Russian terrorist attack on Kakhovka dam also contributed to the rising interest in the topic.

Experts point out that drawing attention to Russian war crimes in Ukraine has resonated with the public in Latin America:

Expert 1: "News about the suffering of ordinary people is met with empathy by Latin American society. In the summer, when that horrific strike on the Okhmatdyt hospital happened, it resonated both on social media and within the region's public sphere."

Expert 3: "It's important to understand that in Latin America, they don't pay attention to events that we consider important. They focus on truly game-changing events. For instance, the sinking of the Moskva cruiser, incursions into the Kursk region, the Kharkiv offensive, or

CONCLUSIONS

- Following Russia's full-scale invasion, Ukraine received unprecedented attention from local audiences on Google, reflecting global search trends. However, after this initial surge of interest, search activity related to Ukraine in Latin America dropped significantly below the global average.
- During the 2.5 years of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, the most common triggers for increased search activity about Ukraine in Latin American countries have been major football events, high-level diplomatic visits, and Russia's egregious war crimes.
- In Latin America, war updates are the most searched topic related to Ukraine on Google, based on the total number of queries. Other frequently searched topics include football and general information about the country. Interestingly, searches about joining the Armed Forces of Ukraine or volunteering there are significantly more popular in Latin America compared to other regions of the world.

PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT UKRAINE

Surveys from 2022 reveal that the majority of people in Latin America are aware of the war in Ukraine and generally support the country. The region has expressed widespread disapproval of Russian military actions, condemnation of the aggression, and sympathy for Ukraine:

- **Mexico:** 70% believe the country should side with Ukraine and the West ([Activa, 2022](#)). Eight months after the invasion began, almost 98% of Mexicans were aware of the situation (Activa, 2022).
- **Argentina:** Nearly 79% oppose Russian military actions ([Ricardo Rouvier & Asociados, 2022](#)).
- **Brazil:** According to the survey, 67% of Brazilian respondents support their government backing Ukraine ([GlobeScan, 2023](#)).

Also, they demonstrated a high level of awareness regarding the events in Ukraine.

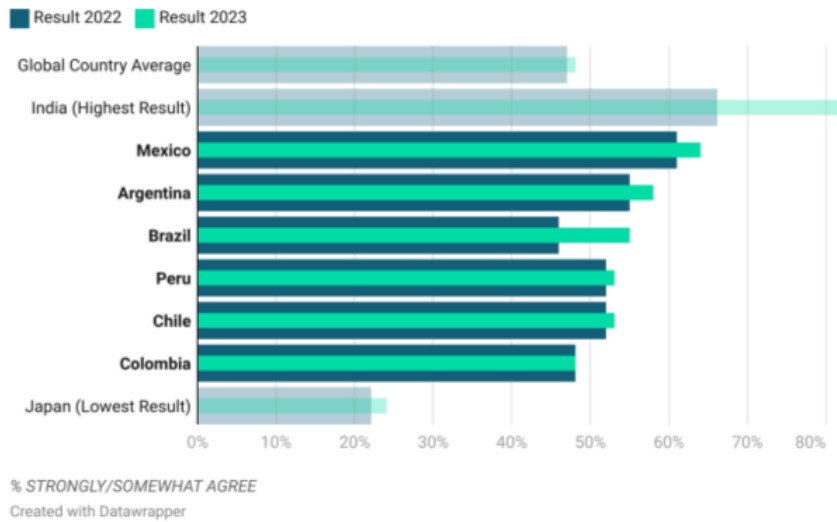
- **Mexico:** Eight months after the invasion began, practically 98% of Mexicans know what is happening ([Activa, 2022](#)).

Despite this, recent trends show growing neutrality and disengagement regarding the war. Economic challenges, such as job creation and economic growth, dominate public concerns across Latin America. This inward focus on domestic issues has led to a gradual shift in priorities, with the war in Ukraine receding from the forefront of public attention (see Chart 2).

Latin America's perspective on Ukraine is shaped by various factors, including anti-American sentiments, historical narratives, and domestic priorities. These elements create both opportunities and challenges for Ukraine in building a stronger presence and image in the region.

INVOLVEMENT IN UKRAINE WAR

Q: The problems in Ukraine are none of [country's] business and we should not interfere



Source: Ipsos, January 2023

Chart 2. The region is showing an increasing trend towards neutrality and disengagement regarding the war in Ukraine

Focus on Domestic Issues

Experts emphasize that Latin America's primary focus remains on internal challenges like economic growth and job creation. This inward focus often relegates the war in Ukraine to the background:

Expert 1: "For them, it's more of a background topic because they are preoccupied with their own pressing issues."

Expert 5: "The war is perceived as a distant conflict, seen by many as part of the U.S.-Russia dynamic, with little relevance to their daily lives."

According to [Ipsos](#), on a global scale, people from the Latin American countries are often among the strongest opponents of measures to support Ukraine.

Narrative Challenges and Anti-American Sentiments

The Russian narrative about NATO and the U.S. being responsible for the war in Ukraine resonates in the region due to the widespread anti-U.S. sentiments. According to [Mitofsky](#), in 2022, 52% of the population in Mexico believed that Russia was the main cause of the war in Ukraine, while 34% attributed the blame to the United States (see Chart 3).

The colonial past of Europe and the long history of European countries extracting valuable resources from Latin America also influence the local audience's readiness to condemn Russia in its war against Ukraine. These historical injustices create a lens through which international conflicts are frequently viewed, leading to scepticism about European and Western intentions in advocating for Ukraine.

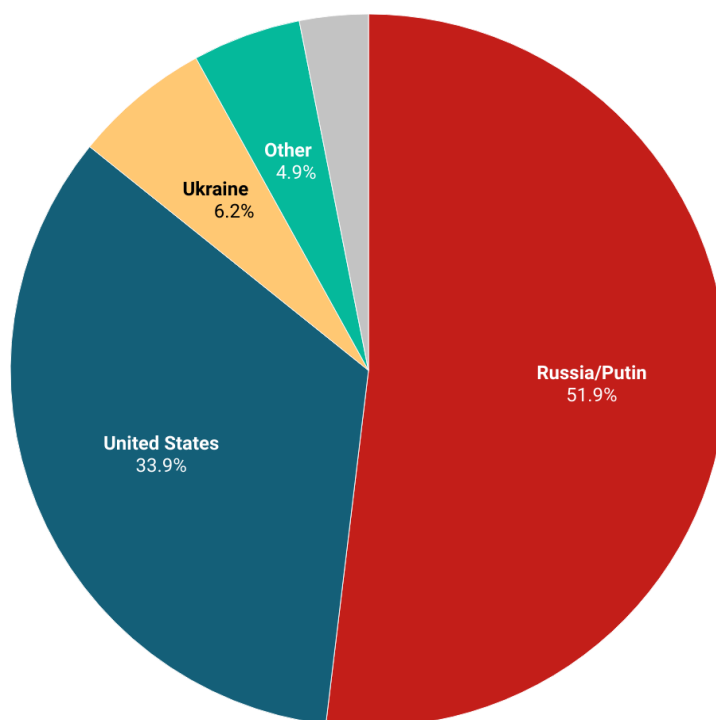
Expert 4: "Even President Lula da Silva has some inclinations towards this view, and partly because of the anti-American, like the perception that we were victims of American imperialism. So we have to be friends of people, of governments that try to counterweight the Americans."

The dominance of Russian narratives and the widespread anti-U.S. sentiment in the region present a significant obstacle to Ukraine's communication efforts in Latin America. Russian disinformation often frames the conflict in ways that align with existing anti-imperialist sentiments, casting Ukraine's allies — particularly the U.S. and European nations — as perpetrators of global inequalities. This rhetoric finds fertile ground in Latin America, where historical memories of interventionism and economic dependency still shape political and cultural attitudes:

There is a lot of information about the reasons why this conflict broke out, if you had to choose just one, for you, who is the main culprit?

NATIONAL STUDY | MEXICO MOBILE SURVEY March/2022

■ Russia/Putin ■ United States ■ Ukraine ■ Other ■ Do not know



Created with Datawrapper

Chart 3. Source: [Mitofsky](#)

To counter the above-mentioned challenges, experts stress the importance of focusing on Ukraine's sovereignty, culture, and independence. These themes resonate particularly well in a region with its own history of struggles against colonial powers and foreign domination. The colonial past of Latin America and its ongoing socio-economic repercussions can serve as a bridge to frame Ukraine's struggle in terms of resistance to imperialism and the fight for self-determination. Emphasizing decolonial and anti-colonial discourses could further strengthen communication efforts within Latin America:

Expert 3: "We avoid framing the war as a conflict between the West and Russia, emphasizing instead that it is a war between Ukraine and Russia."

Expert 3: "It's essential to highlight Ukraine's unique identity and its sovereign decision-making."

Expert 5: "I believe that if Ukraine wants to strengthen its image in Latin America, it should frame the Russian attack as an assault on the sovereignty of a country and on a democratic rule-of-law state."

Expert 1: "Russian propaganda frames the conflict to suggest that it is not Ukraine fighting against Russia. This narrative prevents Latin American societies — historically opposed to colonialism — from unequivocally supporting Ukraine."

PERCEPTION OF UKRAINE: SOFT POWER AND ASSOCIATIONS

According to the Ukraine Message Testing Research Social Survey in 12 countries conducted by Zink Network for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in 2023, the perception of Ukraine's soft power in Latin America is higher than the global average. Latin American nations widely view Ukraine as a promising and favourable partner for business and trade. The negative perception of Ukraine's economy in Venezuela, Uruguay, Nicaragua might be explained by these countries' dependence on Russian arms supplies and cooperation in the oil industry.

Expert 3: "The capital entering Latin America mostly comes from the United States. The Russian economic presence in all the countries of the region is minimal. It is significant in Brazil, higher than Ukraine's, which is understandable, but it is not substantial enough for these countries to position themselves as pro-Russian due to any dependence on Russia's economy. That's not the case; it is more of a myth, and we need to understand this as well."

On the contrary, the perception of Ukraine's culture is rather low in Latin America (see Chart 4). People in Latin America have extremely low awareness of Ukraine, which plays into Russia's hands, as it narrates the current war in terms of the Cold War.

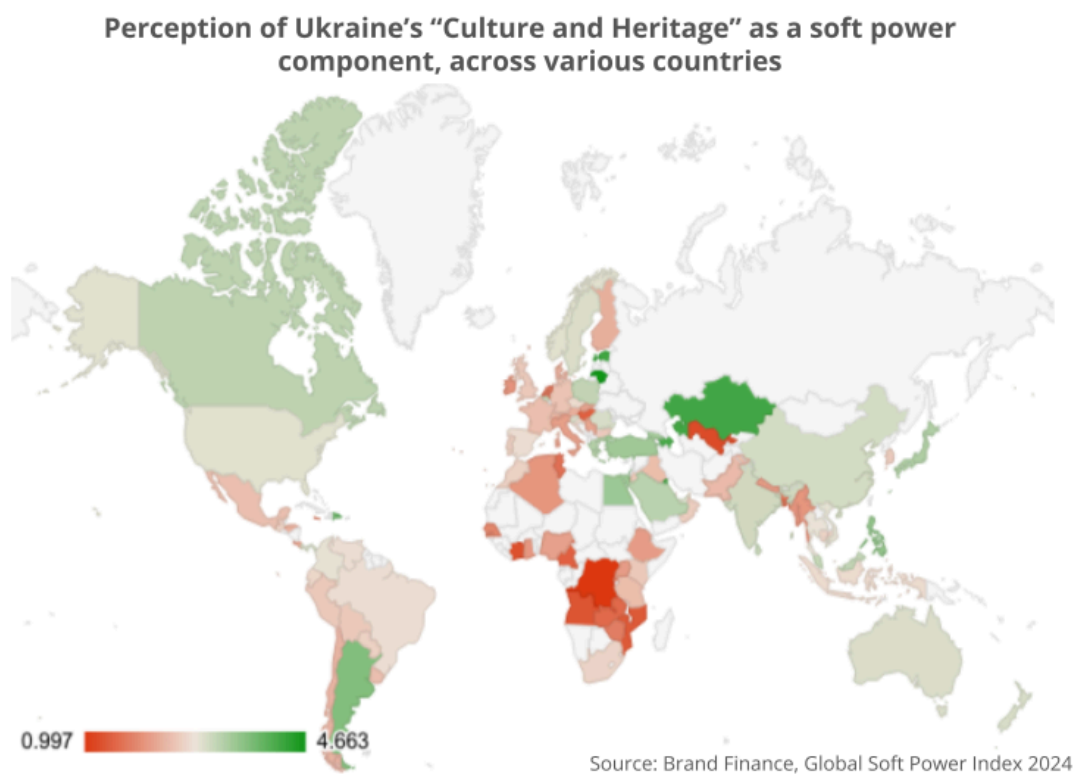


Chart 4. The "Culture & Heritage" soft power pillar include such criteria as "Influential in arts and entertainment", "Food the world loves", "A great place to visit", "Rich heritage", "An appealing lifestyle", and "Leaders in sports".

Russia has long leveraged the positive Soviet legacy in the region and engaged in aggressive cultural diplomacy to portray Russian culture as universal and superior. Even within Brazilian academia, nostalgia for the Soviet Union fosters a favourable view of Russia, complicating efforts to position Ukraine as distinct and sovereign:

Expert 4: "Many people romanticize the Soviet past, they analyse not what the Soviet Union really was, but what they think it was like a dream, a perfect dream. And another factor that is related to the nostalgia for the Soviet Union is the misconception that Russia is the new engineer of the Soviet Union."

The situation in Argentina differs from the rest of the region, likely [due](#) to the wave of Ukrainian immigration to the country between 1994 and 2000.

Today, Ukraine's image is predominantly tied to the war and its struggle, with fewer associations connected to other aspects of the country's identity (see Pic.2). Positive associations are mostly connected with the perceived tenacity and fighting spirit of the Ukrainian people. Negative associations mostly point to destruction and humanitarian crisis resulting from the war.



Source: social survey in 12 countries conducted by Zink Network for MFA of Ukraine, September 2023, Brazil

Pic. 2. Associations with Ukraine among Brazilians

According to the Ukraine Message Testing Research Social Survey, Latin Americans recognize Ukraine’s fight for independence, its pursuit of a democratic future, and its efforts to stabilize global food supplies. Experts note that the themes of defending and protecting human rights resonate strongly with the Latin American population, as they align with the region's own internal challenges. These messages generally make the local audience more favourable toward Ukraine.

Expert 2: “The Ukrainian issue intertwines well with other topics and can be effectively raised when it simultaneously helps address their own concerns. For example, in the case of Mexico, these concerns might include environmental issues, feminist movements, and violence within communities. By incorporating and connecting these topics with the Ukrainian issue, they become more willing to engage in dialogue.”

CONCLUSIONS

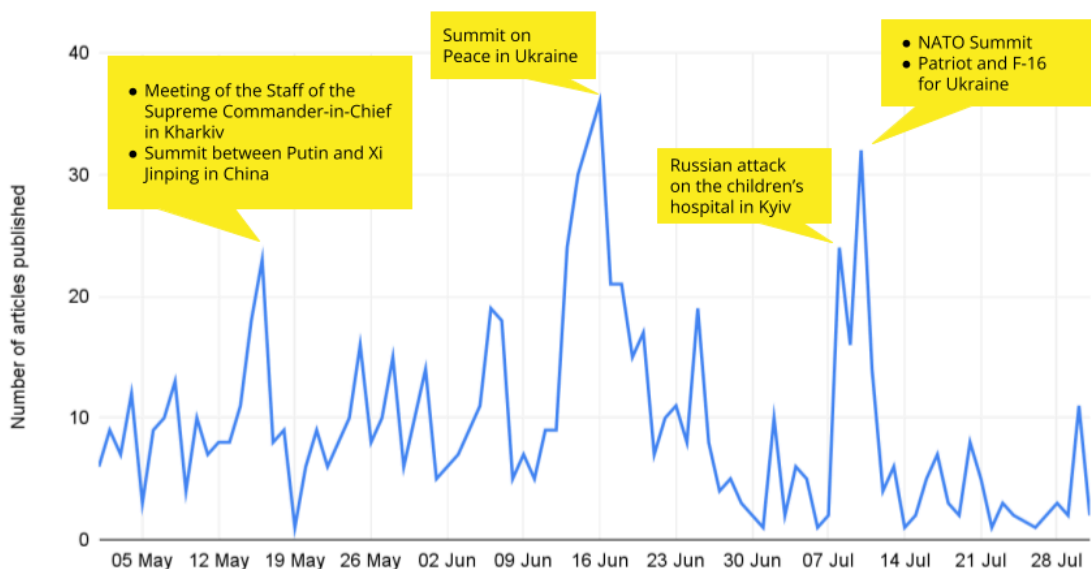
- People in the region are aware of the war and, mostly, support Ukraine's fight against Russian aggression.
- By 2024, the situation had not changed much; rather, it had evolved into a slightly different configuration. The detachment from what the region characterizes as "European affairs" has significantly increased, leading to a rise in neutrality and detachment in the region's attitudes.
- The Latin America countries distancing from the war in Ukraine is influenced by a focus on domestic policy over foreign affairs, further fuelled by Russian propaganda.
- People in Latin America perceive Ukraine's soft power more positively than the global average. They hold a relatively high opinion of Ukraine as an economic power, though they do not widely recognize its cultural influence.
- In general, Ukraine's global image in Latin America is predominantly tied to the war and its struggle, with fewer associations connected to other aspects of the country's identity.

UKRAINE'S COVERAGE IN LOCAL NEWS MEDIA

To assess Ukraine's perception through the lens of the media, we analysed coverage of Ukraine in the largest news outlets across the region. According to SimilarWeb data, the leading media platforms in the studied countries include *Clarín*, *La Nación*, *O GLOBO*, *UOL*, *La Tercera*, *El Mercurio*, *El Universal*, and *El Comercio*. The analysis focused on the period from May to July 2024, examining 855 articles published in Spanish and Portuguese.

In the analysed period, local media published the highest number of articles on June 16, covering the Ukraine peace summit in Switzerland (see Chart 5). Other peaks of search interest included such topics:

- Meeting of the Staff of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief in Kharkiv
- Summit between Putin and Xi Jinping in China
- Russian attack on the children's hospital in Kyiv
- NATO Summit
- Patriot and F-16 for Ukraine



Source: Looqme, May-July 2024

Chart 5. Daily dynamics of publications and key topics about Ukraine

In May-July of 2024, the largest topic about Ukraine was “international support and Western weapons” (see Table 1). Share of voice is calculated as the % of articles dedicated to a particular topic among all the publications about Ukraine in the biggest news media. We believe the analysed sample of sources represents the general trends in major media of Latin America.

Expert 3: "Actually, I would say that the situation with the mass media covering news from Ukraine is quite positive, at least in some countries. It is quite positive, for example, in Argentina, Chile, and Colombia; they present the situation in Ukraine very accurately, absolutely."

Key topics about Ukraine in terms of the % of published articles	
Topic	Share of Voice
International support and Western weapons	35.4%
Russian offensive	7.2%
Discussions on peace negotiations	6.7%
Russian shelling of Ukrainian cities	6.1%
Sport	6.1%
Ukraine's attacks on Russia and occupied territories	5.2%
China's role in the Ukraine-Russia war	3.8%

Source: Looqme, May-July 2024

Table 1. Key topics about Ukraine in terms of the % of published articles

To gain a deeper understanding of the nuances in local media coverage, we conducted a detailed analysis of the sentiment of two key topics: the Russian offensive and discussions regarding peace negotiations.

The sentiment surrounding the topic of peace negotiations was measured on a scale from -1 to 1, where '-1' indicates full support for negotiations under any circumstances, '0' represents neutral or balanced coverage, and '1' signifies the belief that negotiations on Russian terms are unacceptable. The final score shows the average sentiment of the publications.

Similarly, sentiment regarding the Russian offensive was also assessed on a scale from -1 to 1, where '-1' corresponds to pro-Russian narratives, '0' to neutral or fact-based reporting, and '1' reflects expressions of strong support for Ukraine. Similarly, the final score shows the average sentiment of pro-Russian or pro-Ukrainian support of the media that had publications on this topic.

Discussions on peace negotiations (sentiment score = 0.17):

- Overall, news media in Latin America tend to maintain a neutral stance on discussions on peace negotiations.
- 3% of all articles on the topic recognize the Russian-Ukrainian war as a conflict with a global impact.
- Terminology used by the Kremlin and representatives of the Russian Federation is more frequently put in quotation marks to indicate doubt, while Ukrainian statements are questioned less often.

Russian offensive (sentiment score = 0.41):

- In coverage of the Russian offensive, the region's media is inclined to support Ukraine.
- Almost a third of the articles on the topic (27%) echo the Kremlin's narrative that the Kharkiv offensive was intended to create a "safe zone". In most cases, these narratives are merely quotations from Russian government representatives and do not reflect the views of the publishers.
- 27% of articles mention the slow pace of Western aid as a factor contributing to the advance of Russian troops.

Latin American media cite Russian representatives more often, compared to Ukraine's officials. Regarding negotiations, the majority of quoted speakers were from Russia (37%), while Ukrainian speakers were less represented (24%). Other voices on this topic included regional leaders (18%), representatives of Western countries (14%), and Pope Francis (4%). Articles covering Russia's offensive never cite just one side; they consistently include quotes from representatives of both sides.

Articles expressing negative sentiments toward Ukraine predominantly focus on the Kremlin's claims regarding the "illegitimacy" of President Zelensky and accusations of Ukraine "killing civilians". On the other hand, positive news coverage highlights the success of the summit in Switzerland and emphasizes the need to condemn Putin's regime.

Media landscape in the Latin American countries

Media landscape of the region is primarily characterized by highly-concentrated media ownership: a small number of companies or individuals control a large share of the media market. The internet penetration rate above Latin America is [75%](#). Facebook is the leading social platform in the region (see Table 2).

MEDIA USE

THE PERCENTAGE OF INTERNET USERS AGED 16 TO 64 WHO CONSUME EACH MEDIA TYPE

	Brasil	Argentina	Mexico
Using social media	97.0%	97.5%	98.5%
Watching linear and broadcast TV	92.9%	90.9%	92.2%
Watching streaming and on-demand TV	74.3%	69.2%	74.2%
Reading online press content	89.9%	75.2%	72.0%
Reading physical press content	60.0%	48.5%	58.8%
Listening to broadcast radio	70.4%	66.9%	68.3%

Created with Datawrapper

Table 2. Source: DataReportal, January 2024

The largest online media outlets in the region are predominantly Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking. It is important to point out that the region has a strong anti-American sentiment, which complicates the perception of Ukrainian messages in English. Using the region's languages will allow for message adaptation to local realities and demonstrate respect for the culture and identity of each country.

Expert 2: "If we are focusing on communication campaigns and entering social media platforms, it is essential to use the language of the target country exclusively."

Expert 3: "We will not reach the local audience unless we communicate in their language. Our initiatives continue to make the mistake of presenting everything in English, assuming it will be read in the region. This is not the case."



Brazil



Argentina

Media	Monthly Unique Visitors	Media	Monthly Unique Visitors
globo.com	104.0M	infobae.com	94.80M
terra.com.br	33.79M	lanacion.com.ar	34.46M
yahoo.com.br	909,371	clarin.com	25.76M
chnbrasil.com.br	N/A	ambito.com	10.39M
juol.com.br	N/A	yahoo.com.ar	157,579

Source: SimilarWeb

Table 3. Largest news outlets in Brazil and Argentina

Russian online media do not pose significant competition to the region's leading news outlets in the format of news websites (see Table 3). Russian propaganda is particularly active on social media and television through Russia Today en Español and Sputnik Mundo. RT has offices in Venezuela, Cuba, and Argentina.

Facebook and TikTok are popular platforms in the region, and Russian sources of disinformation are successful in these social networks.

Narratives that align with Russian interests in the media likely stem more from deep-rooted anti-USA sentiments than from direct support for the Kremlin itself.

The largest [aggregator](#) of Russian propaganda in Brazil is the website Brasil247, which has an average monthly audience of approximately 9.7 million. This platform reposts the most content from Sputnik and frequently cites the Kremlin.

Conclusions

- Latin American media is characterized by a high level of attention to coverage of a wide range of Ukraine-related topics. The region's media consistently covered Ukraine during the study period, with at least one article published daily and five or more articles appearing on two-thirds of the days.
- Despite Latin America being a key target for Russian propaganda — evidenced by the active presence of Russia Today en Español and Sputnik Mundo — the analysis of Ukraine-related content in leading Latin American news media reveals a generally neutral stance, leaning toward pro-Ukrainian, on critical issues important to Ukraine.
- The media market in Latin America is characterized by highly concentrated ownership, with a small number of companies or individuals controlling a large share of the market. Social media remains the most popular media platform among the local population.
- The media explores a wide range of topics, with over five articles published on 26 subjects during the study period. The interest in Ukraine is substantial, with even niche topics receiving attention. Also, there are country-specific nuances, such as the Argentinian media's heightened focus on sports and daily life in Ukraine.
- The media coverage of Ukraine in Latin America features a diverse range of speakers. Articles often include not only statements from political leaders but also voices from Ukrainian cultural and business figures, as well as the Pope's statements, reflecting a broad spectrum of perspectives.

EXPERT OPINIONS ON MESSAGES ABOUT UKRAINE'S IMAGE IN THE REGION

To gain a deeper understanding of Ukraine's perception in different regions, we conducted interviews with five experts per region. Contacts were identified using a snowball sampling method, asking ENGAGE program partners for recommendations on knowledgeable experts. This ensured a diverse pool of participants.

The interviews followed a semi-structured, in-depth approach, combining the flexibility to explore emerging themes with a framework based on prior desktop research. This method allowed us to gain detailed qualitative insights while ensuring comparability across interviews.

Expert description:

- **Western Researchers:** Scholars from Western institutions with an interest in Ukraine, capable of reflecting on how news and events related to Ukraine are perceived in the region.
- **Ukrainian Experts and Communicators:** Practitioners engaged in Ukraine's external communications in the U.S. or Europe, offering insights into the effectiveness and specifics of such efforts.
- **Soft Power Contributors:** Individuals involved in cultural, economic, and experiential exchanges, relevant for discussions on Ukraine's soft power.

Using qualitative methods, we have focused on developing communication messages. Extracting expert recommendations for refining communication strategies tailored to specific regional contexts.

Based on the analysis of these interviews, we can outline the following communication messages:

Decolonization and Anti-Colonialism

Emphasize shared historical contexts of resistance against colonialism and imperialism. Ukraine should position itself as a nation with first-hand experience in resisting colonial ambitions, a narrative that resonates with the history of many Latin American countries.

Expert 2: "When a European approaches them and starts talking about themselves, they immediately adopt a defensive position, perceiving it as yet another attempt to colonize them."

Expert 4: "You have to show that for centuries there was Russian imperialism in Ukraine, colonialism and imperialism."

Ukraine's Distinct Identity

Highlight Ukraine's unique cultural and historical identity, situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Avoid framing communication through the lens of the U.S. or Europe; instead, craft messages from the perspective of an equal partner.

Expert 2: "They are much more interested when we communicate about our unique identity and the fact that we are located at the crossroads of, for example, Europe and Asia — essentially, that we are at the centre, yet still maintain our identity."

Expert 4: "You have to show how Russia tried to fight Ukrainian identity and to control Ukraine across centuries."

Connecting Global Challenges to Local Issues

Link Ukraine's narrative to topics relevant to Latin America, such as indigenous rights, environmental protection, combating violence, and feminist movements. Demonstrate how Ukraine's experience and solutions can be relevant and valuable to the region.

Expert 2: "We define ourselves as Ukrainians, but with diverse ethnic backgrounds. This is something they don't know about us, and it's a key element that connects us, because Brazil, Argentina, and Chile are countries with large immigrant populations."

Expert 2: "We have the benefit of coming and saying, "We're not patronizing. We are equals, with experiences that you may not have, and you have experiences that we don't. Let's exchange.""

Expert 5: "I believe that if Ukraine wants to strengthen its image in Latin America, it should frame the Russian attack as an assault on the sovereignty of a country and on a democratic rule-of-law state."

Building Human Connections and Physical Presence

Focus on engaging with the diaspora, organizing visits of journalists, cultural and academic delegations to Ukraine, and participating in events across the region. These efforts can foster trust and enhance Ukraine's visibility.

Expert 2: "In Latin America, visits and physical presence are key. They don't know us by face, they've never seen us, and they don't trust us. Any physical presence creates a significant impact."

Expert 1: "A very important initiative is regularly inviting Latin American journalists from leading media outlets to visit Ukraine. This fosters understanding and strengthens trust."

Language and academic collaboration can serve as effective tools for successful communication in the region.

Language as a Strategic Tool

Conduct communications in Spanish and Portuguese. Campaigns in English are unlikely to succeed in the region, as local languages are crucial for effective outreach.

Expert 2: "If we are focusing on communication campaigns and entering social media platforms, it is essential to use the language of the target country exclusively."

Expert 3: "We will not reach the local audience unless we communicate in their language. Our initiatives continue to make the mistake of presenting everything in English, assuming it will be read in the region. This is not the case."

Academic Collaboration

Educational programs for students from the region and partnerships between universities can strengthen educational and cultural ties.

Expert 3: "We have had very positive and productive communication with universities in Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile. These institutions host students with a solid understanding of global affairs. These students should be encouraged to visit Ukraine to witness the situation firsthand."

Expert 5: "It would be valuable to establish a network of academics in Latin America who, through objective analysis, could help explain to academia, students, and the wider public the dangers of the ongoing situation in Ukraine."

Expert 1: "Politics and parties may change, but collaboration between universities, research centers, and cultural institutions will remain. These connections are lasting, and it is crucial to continue working in this direction."

CONCLUSIONS

- **Emphasizing Shared Historical Experiences.** Position Ukraine as a country resisting colonialism, paralleling the anti-colonial struggles of Latin American nations. Highlight Ukraine's experience with Russian imperialism and the historical suppression of its identity.
- **Showcasing Ukraine's Unique Identity.** Present Ukraine as culturally and historically distinct, located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Avoid messaging framed from U.S. or European perspectives; instead, present Ukraine as an equal partner.
- **Connecting to Local Concerns.** By addressing topics such as indigenous rights, environmental preservation, the fight against systemic violence, and gender equality, Ukraine can demonstrate that its experiences are not only relevant but also provide valuable insights into these shared global challenges.
- **Direct engagement and physical presence.** Initiatives such as inviting Latin American journalists to visit Ukraine, organizing cultural exchanges, and building relationships with the Ukrainian diaspora in these countries can significantly enhance credibility and understanding.
- **Language.** To truly resonate with Latin American audiences, Ukraine must deliver its messages in Spanish and Portuguese, the primary languages of the region. Campaigns or materials in English risk alienating the audience, as they may appear out of touch or designed for an external, non-local audience.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Awareness and Support for Ukraine: Public opinion in Latin America shows broad awareness of the Russian war against Ukraine, with initial strong support for Ukraine. However, over time, the region has become more neutral and disengaged, largely due to a focus on domestic issues and growing disinterest in foreign conflicts. Despite this, Ukraine is generally seen positively in terms of its sovereignty and democratic values.

Narrative Challenges: Anti-American sentiments and Russian propaganda complicate Ukraine's image in the region. Ukraine faces challenges in distancing itself from Western-centric narratives and must emphasize its unique identity, resistance to Russian imperialism, and its struggle for sovereignty to better resonate with Latin American audiences.

Strategic Communication Opportunities: Experts suggest framing Ukraine's struggle in terms of decolonization and anti-colonialism, linking the country's history of resistance to similar experiences in Latin America. Ukraine's distinct identity should be emphasized, and its connections to local issues (e.g., indigenous rights, gender equality) can strengthen its relevance in the region.

Media Coverage: Coverage of Ukraine in Latin American media tends to be balanced, often favouring Ukraine, with a focus on international support, the Russian offensive, and peace negotiations. However, Russian propaganda remains influential, particularly on social media platforms, which highlights the importance of adapting messages to local languages and cultures for greater impact.

Language and Direct Engagement: Effective communication with Latin American audiences requires content in Spanish and Portuguese, rather than English. Physical presence, such as inviting journalists and cultural exchanges, plays a significant role in building trust and enhancing Ukraine's visibility.

While Ukraine has some support in Latin America, its long-term influence depends on overcoming historical narratives, emphasizing shared values, and engaging directly with local audiences in culturally relevant ways.