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**Geopolitics of faith: Russian Orthodox Church in the  
Western Balkans**

Master's thesis

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Year of the defence: 2022

## **Declaration**

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on  
29.07.2022

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## References

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## **Abstract**

The study seeks to explore the Russian Orthodox Church's influence on the Western Balkan region from 2005 to 2014, using the soft power theory pioneered by Joseph Nye. The existing cultural ties between majority Orthodox countries in the region and Russian Orthodox Church created an environment that is prone to cultural influence coming from the Church. Using Joseph Nye's description of the public diplomacy mechanism (which is behind soft power application), this work analyzes Russian Orthodox Church activities in the region, establishing that Serbia appeared to be the most prioritized in the Church's public diplomacy, followed by Montenegro, North Macedonia and Republika Srpska respectively. As soft power theory assumes, its application must bring out certain changes, that are produced by the power of attraction. Not surprisingly, Serbia adopted a number of laws that correspond to the stimuli coming from the Church, with less success in the remaining three countries, but with visible results associated with the Church's public diplomacy. The work solidifies the notion that the Russian Orthodox Church has a measurable effect on certain political outcomes in the Western Balkan countries.

## **Abstrakt**

Studie se snaží prozkoumat vliv ruské pravoslavné církve na region západního Balkánu v letech 2005-2014 s využitím teorie měkké moci, jejímž průkopníkem je Joseph Nye. Existující kulturní vazby mezi většinou pravoslavnými zeměmi v regionu a ruskou pravoslavnou církví vytvořily prostředí, které je náchylné ke kulturnímu vlivu pocházejícímu od církve. S využitím popisu mechanismu veřejné diplomacie Josepha Nye (který stojí za aplikací měkké síly) tato práce analyzuje aktivity ruské pravoslavné církve v regionu a zjišťuje, že největší prioritou v rámci veřejné diplomacie církve se ukázalo být Srbsko, následované v tomto pořadí Černou Horou, Severní Makedonií a Republikou Srbskou. Jak předpokládá teorie měkké moci, její aplikace musí přinést určité změny, které jsou vyvolány silou přitažlivosti. Není překvapením, že Srbsko přijalo řadu zákonů, které odpovídají podnětům přicházejícím od církve, ve zbývajících třech zemích se to podařilo méně, ale s viditelnými výsledky spojenými s veřejnou diplomacií církve. Práce upevňuje představu, že ruská pravoslavná církev má měřitelný vliv na určité politické výsledky v zemích západního Balkánu.

## **Keywords**

Western Balkans, Orthodox Church, Russian Orthodox Church, geopolitics of faith, soft power.

## **Klíčová slova**

Západní Balkán, pravoslavná církev, ruská pravoslavná církev, geopolitika víry, měkká moc.

## **Název práce**

Geopolitika víry: Ruská pravoslavná církev na západním Balkáně

# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>8</b>
Literature review	9
Key concepts	11
Relevance	12
Theoretical framework	14
Methodology and sources	25
Structure	25
<b>I RELIGION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>II EASTERN ORTHODOXY AND THE WESTERN BALKANS</b>	<b>33</b>
2.1 Russian Orthodox Church	33
2.2 Serbian Orthodox Church	35
2.3 Montenegrin Orthodox Church	37
2.4 Macedonian Orthodox Church	39
<b>III RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE WESTERN BALKANS – CULTURAL SOFT POWER AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY</b>	<b>42</b>
3.1 Serbia	43
3.2 Montenegro	47
3.3 Republika Srpska	49
3.4 North Macedonia	50
<b>IV THE EFFECT OF RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH’S SOFT POWER ON POLITICAL OUTCOMES IN THE BALKANS</b>	<b>55</b>
4.1 Serbia	55
4.2 Montenegro	58
4.3 Republika Srpska	59
4.4 North Macedonia	60
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	<b>84</b>

## Introduction

Western Balkans remain the only “unclaimed” land in Europe, where many great powers are still actively competing. Now relatively new “players” like the EU and China are posing a threat to Russia's historic dominance in the area. Unlike China and most European countries, Russia has always had cultural ties with Southern Slavic nations, where Orthodox Christianity was the dominant force. Many conflicts have been fought under this banner, and possibly more disputes will follow. One could argue that various geopolitical entities have shown interest in the Western Balkan region in recent years, as the political vacuum that existed for a time began to dissipate as China and Russia began to deepen ties with the peninsula, particularly with Serbia. As the invisible “battle” for the Western Balkans continues, several organizations adopted various techniques to forge strong links that can benefit geopolitical actors regardless of whether Western Balkan countries successfully enter the EU.

One of these actors is the Russian Orthodox Church, which potentially has established itself as a significant factor in Western Balkans politics. When one considers the history of the Balkans and its vast number of invaders, one can appreciate the historical relevance of faith for Balkan Slavs, as it was the unifying factor during Ottoman rule and a fundamental element of their national identities. Russia was always supportive of its Orthodox “brothers” and used this link as a weapon against the Ottoman Empire, which was previously Russia's main adversary on its southern frontiers. Even now, when religion is not as important as it once was, Orthodoxy is or is not used as a platform to develop strong political and cultural links with the Southern Slavic countries.

This background sets the stage for the Russian Orthodox Church, which has its own links to the region, separate from those of Russia as a state. Even though the Church has remained largely a marginal entity during the “atheistic” 20<sup>th</sup> century, today, with the “rebirth” of many nations and subsequently their yearning for establishing their national identity by appealing to their heritage, it gained strength and appeared on the international stage. One form of power, that is often considered unconventional – soft power, can be easily attributed to the Russian Orthodox Church. As an individual actor, the Church has its own interests in the region that can be different from those of the Russian state. This largely under-researched niche can provide some interesting insights into the “invisible” power of the Russian Orthodox Church, which can have significant power when it comes to Orthodox Christians in the Western Balkans.



The lens through which one can look at the Russian Orthodox Church's soft power is the eponymous theory, pioneered by Joseph Nye.<sup>1</sup> This theory assumes the existence of another type of power, other than hard power that is more visible to the observers. The nature of this power allows actors to pursue their interests, without resorting to obvious measures, and it is safe to assume that this is the exact type of power that can be attributed to the Russian Orthodox Church. The aim of this thesis is to employ the soft power theory in the case of the Russian Orthodox Church and identify the ways in which this entity chooses to establish itself as a respectable authority, attracting Orthodox Christians in the Western Balkans, among which are influential members of those societies.

## Literature review

Topics like the influence of religion on contemporary politics are far from being neglected in the scientific world. It has been widely researched, including the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church. Looking through available resources, it is evident that the Russian Orthodox Church has been studied in a more historical context, including the Balkan perspective. In order to understand the extent to which a certain topic was researched, chosen literature will be grouped under books and articles.

### *Books*

Alexander Dugin, *Foundations of Geopolitics: The Geopolitical Future of Russia: English Translation*<sup>2</sup>

This book is one of the most notable ones when it comes to the geopolitics of Russia and its supposed doctrine. In part 6 of the book, the author studies the geopolitics of Orthodoxy, which is one of the most important parts for the purpose of writing the given thesis. What is equally relevant is part 4 of the book, where the author discusses the geopolitical future of Russia, where he also analyses the role of Orthodoxy in Russia's geostrategy.

*Nations under God. The Geopolitics of Faith in the Twenty-First Century*<sup>3</sup>

This book represents a collection of essays dedicated to the question of religion and states in the contemporary world. The main focus of this book is the role of religion in world affairs. The book will contribute to the very basis of the thesis since it explores the most significant

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<sup>1</sup> Nye, Joseph S. 2004. *Soft Power. The Means To Success In World Politics*. 1st ed. New York: PublicAffairs. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Дугин, Александр Г. 2000. *Основы геополитики*. Москва: Арктогея-Центр. 578.

<sup>3</sup> Herrington, Luke M, Alasdair McKay and Jeffrey Haynes, 2015. *Nations under God*. Bristol: E-International Relations. 286.

notion and will be the key to understanding the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in Balkan geopolitics.

Bryn Geffert, Theofanis G. Stavrou. *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: The Essential Texts*<sup>4</sup>

This book represents a 'guide' to Eastern Orthodox Christianity and explores its history and all the relevant spheres of its activities. This work is useful for putting certain political events into context during the process of writing this thesis.

#### *Articles*

Daniel P Payne, *Nationalism and the Local Church: The Source of Ecclesiastical Conflict in the Orthodox Commonwealth*<sup>5</sup>

This article deals with the role of 'local' Orthodox Churches and their role in supporting ethno-religious nationalism in nation-states.

Lain, Stefana, *Eastern Orthodox Church*<sup>6</sup>

The article provides a historical context for the Eastern Orthodox Church's development and pays special attention to Balkan countries and their relationship with Russia and its respective Orthodox Churches.

Tatiana Christy, *The Russian Church as Putin's Weapon of Influence*<sup>7</sup>

The article focuses on the notion that the Russian Orthodox Church is the instrument of Russia's foreign policy that is widely used. Since it was published in 2008, the article could not encompass all the contemporary changes and actions that were undertaken by the Russian Orthodox Church.

Nikita Lomagin, *Interest groups in Russian foreign policy: The invisible hand of the Russian Orthodox Church*<sup>8</sup>

The article explores the relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian society and how it influences different spheres of life. Understanding the role of the Church in Russian

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<sup>4</sup> Geffert, Bryn And Theofanis G Stavrou. 2016. *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1350.

<sup>5</sup> Payne, Daniel P. 2007. *Nationalism and the Local Church: The Source of Ecclesiastical Conflict in the Orthodox Commonwealth*. *Nationalities papers*. New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, **35**(5), 831-852.

<sup>6</sup> Lain, Stefana. 2019. *Eastern Orthodox Church*. *Religion and Contemporary Politics: A Global Encyclopedia*, 548-554.

<sup>7</sup> Christy, Tatiana. 2018. *The Russian Church as Putin's Weapon of Influence*. *The New American (Belmont, Mass.)*. Appleton: American Opinion Publishing, **34**(15), 19-23.

<sup>8</sup> Lomagin, Nikita. 2012. *Interest groups in Russian foreign policy: The invisible hand of the Russian Orthodox Church*. *International politics (Hague, Netherlands)*. **49**(4), 498-516.

society is crucial when judging the influence of the church in the country's politics and consequently foreign policy and geostrategy.

Dmitrii Sidorov, Post-Imperial Third Romes: Resurrections of a Russian Orthodox Geopolitical Metaphor<sup>9</sup>

The article explores the notion of the Russian Orthodox Church being a geopolitical 'tool' Russian Orthodoxy used to be an instrument of justification of messianic and imperialistic ambitions, that as the author argues in this article, still true today.

M. D. Suslov, "Holy Rus": The Geopolitical Imagination in the Contemporary Russian Orthodox Church<sup>10</sup>

This article explores the idea of the "Holy Rus" and its use in the contemporary political narrative. As such, the notion of "Holy Rus" is often used by Patriarch Kirill and other representatives of the church. This article contributes to the positioning of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russian society as well as exploration of geopolitical views of the Church itself.

## Key concepts

In order to avoid misunderstandings and keep the research relevant to the chosen topic it is essential to define the key concepts that will be reoccurring in this work. The key concepts are *Western Balkans*, *Orthodox Church*, *Russian Orthodox Church*, and *geopolitics of faith*. Additionally, it is important to highlight the *timeframe* in which these concepts will be considered – from 2005 (when North Macedonia gained EU candidate status) till August 2014, when the conflict in Ukraine escalated.<sup>11</sup> 2005 is chosen as it is assumed that this event would make Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church more active in the region (first EU candidate in the considered region), as they consider the EU a cultural rival at the very least.<sup>12</sup> 2014 is chosen as the upper limit since one can consider this year as the beginning of a new political process that is still unfolding, therefore conclusions reached can prove to be misleading in the bigger picture.

*Western Balkans*. This concept refers to a set of countries - Albania, Bosnia and

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<sup>9</sup> Sidorov, Dmitrii .2006. Post-Imperial Third Romes: Resurrections of a Russian Orthodox Geopolitical Metaphor, *Geopolitics*, 11:2, 317-347, DOI: 10.1080/14650040600598585

<sup>10</sup>Suslov, M.D. 2015. "Holy Rus": The Geopolitical Imagination in the Contemporary Russian Orthodox Church, *Russian Social Science Review*, 56:3, 43-62, DOI: 10.1080/10611428.2015.1070631

<sup>11</sup> House of Commons. 2021. "Ukraine Crisis: A Timeline (2014 - Present).", 18.

<sup>12</sup> Candidate Countries - Enlargement - Environment - European Commission. Ec.europa.eu. 2021. <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/candidates.htm>. Accessed on: 06.09.2021.

Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo.<sup>13</sup> It usually appears in the context of EU accession and “power struggle” in the Balkans. In this thesis, Albania and Kosovo will be excluded, since the number of Orthodox Christians in both entities can be deemed as insignificant, which will be further elaborated on in chapter I.<sup>14</sup>

*Orthodox Church.* The concept refers to a religious institution and is one of three major doctrinal groups in Christianity. It is worth mentioning that it is present in the Middle East, the Balkans, and former Soviet countries. In this work, this concept will refer specifically to the Eastern Orthodox Church or Orthodox Catholic Church that is the one present in the area of interest. The church itself consists of “autocephalous” churches that are independent, but with the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople being on top of the hierarchy.<sup>15</sup>

*Russian Orthodox Church.* One of the largest “autocephalous” churches of Eastern Orthodoxy, and therefore can be deemed as one of the most influential.<sup>16</sup> For the purpose of clarity the Russian Orthodox Church will appear in the text as “ROC”, with similar abbreviations used for Serbian Orthodox Church – SOC, and Montenegrin Orthodox Church (MOC). The name of the Macedonian Orthodox Church will be written in full to avoid confusion with the Montenegrin Orthodox Church.

*Geopolitics of faith.* This concept refers to the role of religion in geopolitics and geopolitical strategies employed by actors of world politics. In this particular project, it strictly refers to the Russian Orthodox Church.

## Relevance

The topic of soft power influence on any entity that has ties with Russia and its government remains relevant due to several reasons. Before February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, this topic was relevant due to the conflicting interests of the EU and Russia in the Western Balkan region, with the former working on creating strong links and a clear EU perspective for the countries, and the latter appealing to its historic ties and similar religious background. Since February 24<sup>th</sup>, this topic has become even more significant, due to the collective effort of the

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<sup>13</sup> Western Balkans - Trade - European Commission. 2021. Ec.europa.eu [https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/western-balkans/#:~:text=Albania%2C%20Bosnia%20and%20Herzegovina%2C%20North,Montenegro%2C%20Serbia%2C%20Kosovo\\*](https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/western-balkans/#:~:text=Albania%2C%20Bosnia%20and%20Herzegovina%2C%20North,Montenegro%2C%20Serbia%2C%20Kosovo*). Accessed on: 06.09.2021.

<sup>14</sup> Look at Chapter I

<sup>15</sup> Meyendorff, J, 2021. Eastern Orthodoxy | Definition, Origin, History, & Facts. Encyclopedia Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Eastern-Orthodoxy>. Accessed on: 06.09.2021.

<sup>16</sup> Russian Orthodox Church | History & Facts. Encyclopedia Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Russian-Orthodox-Church> Accessed on: 06.09.2021.

Western countries to suppress any influence related to Russia, including the Russian Orthodox Church. Being aware of the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church and being familiar with patterns and strategies used in exercising soft power, governments can take measures in case the influence of the Church is not in line with their policies. As previously soft power theory was not used to assess the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church, this thesis will deliver some new insights that will contribute to the larger body of research.

Hypothesis and research questions

The aim of this project is to evaluate the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Western Balkans. The hypothesis of this work is that the Russian Orthodox Church remains highly influential in the region, by the means of soft power tools. In order to achieve the objective of the thesis, one must find an answer to the following question: *is the Russian Orthodox Church politically influencing the Western Balkan countries?*

To reach a conclusive answer, this question can be answered by these subsequent inquiries:

- What is the “religious map” of the Western Balkans?

To answer this question it is essential to understand the environment in which the Russian Orthodox Church operates in the Western Balkans. How religious the population is and what percentage of the population is Orthodox Christian, represents the basis for this research. Looking into these topics will allow us to identify the level of susceptibility to the Russian Orthodox Church’s influence.

- What is the structure and status of both the Russian Orthodox Church and local Churches?

How impactful the Russian Orthodox Church can be depends directly on the status of the Orthodox Church (both Russian and local). Answering this research question can reveal how ‘vulnerable’ one country can be to the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church or how impactful the church can be on the policies adopted in the region. Additionally, being aware of the structure of all Churches can help find more manifestations of soft power, such as the seniority of the Church members involved in different events.

- How did the Russian Orthodox Church apply public diplomacy methods in the Western Balkan countries?

When applying Nye’s soft power theory, one of the ways to identify strategic goals and plans of action applied in different Western Balkan countries is to analyze the public diplomacy

methods. Answering this question will show us what the Russian Orthodox Church attempted to influence in the region.

- What is the effect of ROC's soft power on political outcomes in the Balkans?

To be able to measure the impact of the soft power of the Russian Orthodox Church, it is important to find the link between the adopted policies that are in line with the Church's narrative. After analyzing activities and trends associated with the Russian Orthodox Church, it will be necessary to look at the policies and political choices made by the respective governments and track how they were received by the public.

As the Russian Orthodox Church is treated as a separate entity and not as the instrument of Russian Foreign policy, it will be the main focus of this thesis. The link between Russia's foreign policy efforts and the soft power efforts of the Russian Orthodox Church could be an interesting topic to explore, however, due to the specific topic of this thesis, this segment will be omitted as it cannot receive the attention it needs within this thesis. The high volume of potential findings can candidate the topic of the relation between the Russian Government (and its Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the Russian Orthodox Church for another thesis or further research.

## **Theoretical framework**

The basis for the theoretical framework for the chosen topic is Joseph Nye's conception of "soft power" and his interpretation of its role in world politics. This concept was first developed by Nye in 1990 in his book "Bound to Lead" where he addressed the seeming decline of American power.<sup>17</sup> The author emphasized that he is not the first person to recognize this type of power and that great thinkers of the past have already done this before him, like E.H. Carr (in 1939 he wrote about categories of power, including the power over opinion).<sup>18</sup> This, however, does not diminish J. Nye's contribution to political science, as he coined the term that is now widely used and he developed this idea in a coherent theory that helps us understand this almost immeasurable side of power. One of his works dedicated to soft power is "Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics" which will be the basis of the theoretical framework in this research.

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<sup>17</sup> Nye, Joseph S. 2004. *Soft Power. The Means To Success In World Politics*. 1st ed. New York: PublicAffairs. Preface, XI.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 8.

Power as a concept is notorious in the world of political science as there is no definition of it that is accepted by all researchers and theoreticians. For the sake of brevity, only Nye's definition will be addressed. Nye defines power, in the simplest terms, as "the ability to get the outcomes one wants", or more precisely as "the ability to influence the behaviour of others".<sup>19</sup> The author further develops this thought and describes two ways of achieving this outcome – coercion and voluntarism or the ability to attract the object and persuade them to want what you want.<sup>20</sup> For the biggest part of known history, any Great Power could have been tested only through war, or if one entity had enough resources to be (repeatedly) victorious.<sup>21</sup> This puts emphasis on the hard power, however, over time resources that could have granted victories in battles changed from mere numbers with the 'outburst' of nationalism and other developments in societies. This leads us to one of the most important notions, that eventually leads to success or failure in exercising any type of power – the context in which this relationship exists.<sup>22</sup> Certain power resources may not be able to contribute to the goal if the context is not suitable for it, for example, the importance and value of cobalt before the electric car industry boom or following Nye's example, uranium before the nuclear age.<sup>23</sup> Depending on the context and availability of certain resources, political entities can exercise a few types of power, or even combine those types in order to achieve their goals. This leads us to two important concepts – the concept of soft and hard power.

Hard power is seemingly well understood by all the actors in world politics, as it represents the tangible part of it. As Nye points it out - it is well known that economic and military means often succeed in changing someone's position, using familiar instruments like "carrots" (inducements) and "sticks" (threats or punishment) to achieve one's goal.<sup>24</sup> The other, more delicate and indirect side of the "coin" is soft power that is equally capable of delivering the same results as its counterpart, but through a completely different mechanism. One country can achieve its goals by relying on the fact that other countries admire its values and emulate its example, wanting to achieve its level of prosperity,

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 1,2.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 1,2.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Laurence, Iliff. 2021. "EV Battery Makers Would Like To Move Away From Cobalt". *Automotive News*. <https://www.autonews.com/manufacturing/can-ev-battery-makers-move-away-cobalt#:~:text=%E2%80%9CCobalt%20is%20considered%20the%20highest,increases%20their%20stability%20and%20safety>. Accessed on: 15.05.2022

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 5.

therefore following this country's incentives.<sup>25</sup> This puts emphasis on attraction, rather than on threats (backed by military force and economic sanctions). In essence, soft power is the ability to get others to want the outcomes you want or, in other words, the ability to shape the opinions and preferences of others.<sup>26</sup> If one country succeeds in exercising this type of power, it reduces the need for hard power instruments. Nye points out that soft power is more characteristic of democratic politics, as authoritarian leaders tend to rely on hard power.<sup>27</sup> The ability to influence one country's preferences is directly connected to attractive culture, political values and institutions, personality, and policies that seem legitimate or have certain moral authority. The key is to represent values that one wants to follow, and this will significantly reduce the cost and energy needed to influence one's preferences.<sup>28</sup> What makes soft power different from mere influence is that it has the ability to attract, whereas influence can be achieved even with traditional hard power tools. Another difference is the tangibility of the resources used. On the other hand, what makes these two types of power similar lies in the very definition of power, and that is to influence one's behaviour.<sup>29</sup>

Hard and soft power can be represented on a spectrum where two extremes are presented – command and co-optive behaviour that correspond to hard and soft power accordingly (Appendix 1).<sup>30</sup> Command behaviour, or in other words the ability to influence other's actions, relies on coercion and inducement. One culture's attractiveness and its values or the ability to influence political choices so that any other preferences seem unrealistic – those are all the features on which co-optive behaviour lies upon, or in other words – the ability to influence what others want. These behaviours do not necessarily correspond with one type of power or the other and can rather be used for both, for example, certain institutions that were created with the command behaviour, can later gain the status of legitimate institutions or strong economy can be the object of attraction.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, the two ends of the spectrum usually correspond to the two types of power and it is safe to sort these behaviours accordingly, as Nye states.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 7.



Soft power instruments or resources are any resources capable of producing attraction that can be measured through polls or focus groups. Whether this attraction managed to achieve the final goal – desired policy outcomes, can be judged on an individual basis, depending on the case in question.<sup>33</sup> These resources stem from values that are expressed in one country's (organization's) culture, precedents it sets with its internal practices and policies and how it behaves with others.<sup>34</sup> Naturally, attraction does not guarantee desired results, similarly to hard power, when military or economic superiority does not guarantee victory. Soft power can also have a more long-term result, as one appeals to shared values, a sense of attraction, shared purposes, and values of justness as opposed to forcing one to follow your incentive with strength, which will eventually wane as you run out of required resources. One of the signs that soft power is engaged is when a country follows one's incentives without any observable threats or, in other words, influenced by intangible attraction to the shared values and the duty and justness of achieving them.<sup>35</sup> Soft power does not require hard power to back it up, which can be proven by the example of the Vatican, which does not possess any divisions (as Stalin noted), however, a country can lose its attractiveness if it experiences military and/or economic decline, as some countries find these capacities attractive (the myth of invincibility).<sup>36</sup> This indicates that hard power and soft power can reinforce, as the aforementioned myth of invincibility, or interfere with each other, for instance, a country that pursues only soft power means can abstain from using hard power when needed, and on the other hand, a county that is eager to use hard power more often can completely disregard the effects of it on soft power, that can reduce the effectivity of their "campaigns".<sup>37</sup>

Reviewing the resources of soft power, one can point out three primary resources: culture, political values and foreign policy. The first resource can be narrowed down to the features of the culture that are the most attractive to others, the second one to respecting its political values both abroad and domestically and the third one to seeing those policies as legitimate and possessing moral authority. Culture, as Nye defines it, is "the set of values and practices that create meaning for a society".<sup>38</sup> Culture, among other ways, can be

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 11.

transmitted through commerce, exchanges, personal visits, and contacts.<sup>39</sup> It can have several layers, those that correspond to so-called “high culture” – education, art, literature, philosophy, history; and “popular culture” – mass entertainment.<sup>40</sup> How culture operates as a tool of soft power can be explained through values (both universal and exclusively shared) and connected policies that promote these shared interests and values. This, in turn, creates attraction and duty that can influence the behaviour of the “attracted” country (among other things, making it more willing to cooperate on a larger scale).<sup>41</sup> The more exclusive these values and culture (in general) are, the smaller the scope of its influence, as was the case with the Soviet Union, as Nye points out.<sup>42</sup> What can be seen in popular discourse, is that oftentimes soft power is used as the synonym for the power of popular culture. This approach confuses soft power with the cultural resource that is used to exercise it, or more precisely with the behaviour of attraction (Niall Ferguson).<sup>43</sup> Even though popular culture is a very powerful resource, alone it does not guarantee success in the form of getting the outcomes one desires, as was pointed out by Nye – Kim Jong Il was fond of pizza and videos from the US, but it didn’t change his outlook on relations with the country itself.<sup>44</sup> What makes some resources effective is, again, the context, which can make some resources obsolete, as well as the size of the group with which the resource (or more precisely - values) resonates.

Political values that are championed by the government in domestic policies, foreign policy and international institutions are an integral resource of soft power. Giving an attractive example can increase one’s soft power, and the opposite is true for pursuing unappealing policies.<sup>45</sup> It is worth pointing out that, unlike with hard power, governments do not hold a high degree of ownership and control over soft power.<sup>46</sup> The values that are portrayed in popular culture, for example, are almost out of reach of the government (in liberal societies) and can sometimes have conflictive nature. Nye gives an example of movies that criticize Islam, that is contradicting the American government’s effort to improve its relations with Islamic nations.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 15.

Domestic and foreign government policies are another pillar of soft power. If one country displays “double standards” (adopting indifference to popular opinion, arrogant, hypocritical policies, blindly following national interests), it can significantly reduce the successfulness of their soft power both abroad or at home. One example is the 2003 Iraq War, which triggered a decline in the US's attractiveness.<sup>48</sup> Another example given by Nye is the racial segregation present during the 1950s that significantly affected US soft power in Africa.<sup>49</sup> Some policies can have a long-term effect or can start influencing one's policies (and political decisions) just when the context aligns with them (example: Carter's human rights policies that started taking effect in Argentina 20 years later).<sup>50</sup>

Nye points out that there are some critics of the concept of soft power, who fail to link imitation or attraction to soft power, seeing them only individually. He does admit that not every case of imitation and/or attraction results in desired political outcomes, however, this does not dismiss the fact that in the majority of cases they do and it is achieved without employing threats or payments.<sup>51</sup> It appears that there are certain conditions that need to be met in order for attraction to lead to preferred outcomes. As it was noted previously, context plays a pivotal role in the effectiveness of soft power tools. Some countries will be more receptive to this form of power if their cultures are similar to one of the countries that are exercising this type of power. The key to the success of soft power depends on the actors involved, the quality of their relationship, the circumstances and lastly the proportion of the people who will be able to interpret and “receive” this soft power.<sup>52</sup> Soft power is not concentrated – therefore, it might be a bit challenging to see its manifestations. Soft power appears to be more significant in democratic regimes (dispersed power) than in authoritarian regimes (concentrated power) – as public opinion limits the scope of politicians' actions, which is another circumstance that needs to be taken into account. Another feature of soft power is that it is better suited for some more global goals, even though it can affect specific ones. Nye gives an example of America's goal to create an environment that will be receptive to democratic values, and this is better achieved by attraction rather than coercion. To summarize, soft power or attraction as a tool is more effective if the context (similarity of cultures, the receptiveness of the society, dispersed state of power) and the scale of the goal

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 16.

(long-term and global) is appropriate. Another argument against the concept of soft power in international politics is the fact that soft power, as described, is not controlled by the government. In liberal societies, this could never be the case and the mere fact that soft power is largely generated by the civil society itself does not negate soft power's existence.<sup>53</sup> Soft power that is generated by churches, firms, universities etc. can either be in line with the official foreign policy goals or pursue completely different values and goals. Governments should try and, where possible, align their actions with the soft power generated by nongovernmental groups, especially as private sources of soft power are growing in significance in the global information age.<sup>54</sup> The last argument challenging the concept of soft power is concerning the instrument that is used to measure its effect. Opinion polls are not capable of accurately measuring the effect of soft power, especially over time as questions offered on these polls can change. However, Nye argues that opinion polls offer a good initial approximation of the attractiveness of one country and how unpopular policies influenced this parameter (especially if this parameter appears to be consistent over time).<sup>55</sup>

The importance of soft power becomes more and more evident in the postindustrial democracies that hold welfare in high regard and prefer it to glory and avoid (high) casualties. Hard power, with its war connotations, is difficult to justify, as the absence of this war narrative makes it difficult to morally justify and ensure popular support (unless the very existence of the state is at stake).<sup>56</sup> This appears to be true for nondemocratic regimes as well, as the use of force can significantly affect the economy (with the loss of foreign investments and flow of capital) in a globalized economy. In the information age cooperation is held in high regard, which was not entirely true even half a century ago.<sup>57</sup> These factors reinforce the notion that soft power has an edge over hard power, as it aligns with the values and principles of modern societies. Power is less tangible nowadays, especially in advanced democracies, according to Nye. The author also points out that not all countries are advanced democracies, and this is the reason why we can witness the existence of both types of power, hard and soft, with all three sources, soft, military, and economic (Appendix 2).<sup>58</sup> As the information technology and overwhelming process of

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 18.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 31.

globalization are creating the so-called “global village”, we can expect rapid changes and dynamic political processes that might speed up the development of the countries that are “falling behind”. These factors are also giving power to NGOs and transnational corporations since they are not limited by borders and can attract and unite citizens. In this instance, credibility, attractiveness and legitimacy are sources of soft power, or in other words, the ability to share information and maintain credibility.<sup>59</sup> Nye suggests that in the global information age soft power will become increasingly important – giving the most power to those actors who have several channels of communication with which they can shape narratives, promote their culture that has attractive and universal qualities and those who maintain credibility in their policies and values both at home and abroad. It is important to point out that soft power is gaining importance largely because of economic and social changes, rather than the pure official agenda of governments.<sup>60</sup>

The information age marks nonstate actors as one of the most important actors of world politics. It is no secret that these NGOs are outnumbering existing countries and they are not limited by borders. This gives them the right to proclaim that they are not protecting any government’s interest, and they can impose new norms on governments and shape the public’s opinion on how things should be done. With the increase in numbers, NGOs have also diversified in terms of types from churches and multinational corporations with large budgets, to essentially any organization, even individuals who can afford communication costs that were significantly reduced by the new technological advancements. These NGOs can infiltrate governments through like-minded politicians and are essentially making governments compete for the attention of their citizens with these powerful NGOs.<sup>61</sup> As Nye put it “plenty of information leads to scarcity of attention”.<sup>62</sup> Going back to the soft power of churches, Nye uses the example of the Roman Catholic Church that has a global outreach and following, again as the outcome of attraction rather than coercion.

Exercising soft power is a difficult task, as the resources from which it stems are outside the government’s control (and very dispersed) and the context might not be receptive to these impulses even if one manages to uniformly generate them. Another unfavourable feature of soft power is that it might take a long time before it shows the desired results.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 91.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 106.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 99.

Regardless of these obstacles a country can pursue soft power through public diplomacy, which was used to wield soft power for centuries (for example France and its efforts to spread its language and culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth century). Public diplomacy, in this theory, encompasses all interactions with both nongovernmental individuals and organizations and governments. This indicates that these interactions are affecting private and government views.<sup>64</sup> What makes public diplomacy different from propaganda is that it has credibility and compared to public relations, it is not limited to communication and creation of good image, but it is also creating long-lasting relationships that prepare the environment for desired policies.<sup>65</sup> Public diplomacy has three layers – daily communications, strategic communication and development of long-lasting relationships with individuals. The first layer – daily communications – has a task to elaborate on any policy decisions, both domestic and foreign. Nye points out that many decision makers pay significant attention to this layer when communicating with the press, but oftentimes these decision makers focus on the domestic media outlets, but for this layer international press plays a more important role as they shape the opinion of significantly larger audiences. It is also important to maintain rapid response capabilities, so any false information can be addressed as soon as possible so it does not cause any damage to public diplomacy efforts. Strategic communication is the second layer of public diplomacy, and it represents campaigning for certain “themes” or government policies. This involves planning a series of events that will support the cause and make it relevant.<sup>66</sup> The third layer is dealing with individuals with whom one develops lasting relationships through exchanges, conferences, scholarships and access to media channels.<sup>67</sup> Each layer is important for creating a favorable image and achieving desired outcomes, but as it was mentioned multiple times the audience has to be receptive to the message and the message itself has to hide self-interest components and be aligned with the general narrative, otherwise it might be counterproductive. In order for public diplomacy or the exercised soft power to yield results, one must pay attention to the “feedback” and shared values to understand how the audience is receiving the message and what will make it want the same outcome. Cultural filters might distort the message, so it is advisable to follow the message with actions that can reinforce the message in a

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 107.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 107.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 108.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 109.

“different language” that is understandable for the target audience.<sup>68</sup> As governments lose their exclusive rights for international communication, NGOs can operate as a “front”, especially since postmodern societies tend to be sceptical of governments. With this indirect public diplomacy, governments can gain credibility but lose control over the process.<sup>69</sup>

The soft power theory can be deemed as well accepted in academia; however, some researchers point to certain weaknesses of the theory. One of the first lines of criticism addresses the focus of the theory on governments and how they are viewed as a coherent entity, entirely avoiding the fact that within one government there might be multiple voices with different interests and goals.<sup>70</sup> The theory also seems to overlook the complexity of relationships that governments foster with NGOs, which can be conflictual, collaborative or discharged.<sup>71</sup> What appears to be a reoccurring line of criticism is the scarce description of the methodology of measurement of attractiveness.<sup>72</sup> This, in turn, leads to many issues, other than lacking the operationalization instructions, such as lacking universal indexes of measuring attractiveness and therefore inability to compare soft power manifestation over time, especially if done by different authors. Contextualization of these measures poses another problem, as seeming spikes in numbers or some activities might be insignificant if put in the right context and consequently lead to wrong conclusions.<sup>73</sup> Taking all of these lines of criticism into consideration is essential for the successful implementation of the soft power theory, however, as it was said many times, any theory will always have certain “blind spots” and the role of academia is to spot them and, if possible, offer solutions, with the goal of creating a theory that has the capacity to take into account all the possible variations of described elements. In the end, theories are here to help explain certain parts of reality and this view is oftentimes slightly simplified in order to gain explanatory power.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 111.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 113.

<sup>70</sup> Hall, Peter. 1993. Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State. The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain, *Comparative Politics* 25 (3), 275-296. DOI: [10.2307/422246](https://doi.org/10.2307/422246). Accessed on: 13.06.2022.

<sup>71</sup> Angey-Sentuc, Gabrielle, and Jérémie Molho. 2015. "A Critical Approach To Soft Power: Grasping Contemporary Turkey's Influence In The World". *European Journal Of Turkish Studies*, no. 21. doi:10.4000/ejts.5287. <https://journals.openedition.org/ejts/5287#text>. Accessed on: 13.06.2022.

<sup>72</sup> Hall, Todd. 2010. “An Unclear Attraction: A Critical Examination of Soft Power as an Analytical Category,” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3, 189-211. OI: [10.1093/cjip/poq005](https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poq005). DOI : [10.1093/cjip/poq005](https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poq005); Blanchard, Jean-Marc F., and Fujia Lu. 2012. “Thinking Hard About Soft Power: A Review and Critique of the Literature on China and Soft Power.” *Asian Perspective* 36, no. 4: 565–589. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42704806>. Accessed on: 13.06.2022.

<sup>73</sup> Blanchard, Jean-Marc F., and Fujia Lu. 2012. “Thinking Hard About Soft Power: A Review and Critique of the Literature on China and Soft Power.” *Asian Perspective* 36, no. 4: 570. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42704806>. Accessed on: 13.06.2022.

After a detailed assessment of the soft power theory, it is safe to say that it can be successfully implemented in the context of the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) on the Balkan states, especially considering the nature of the actor itself. First of all, it is evident that the ROC is not a state actor and the only type of power it can use is soft power (as the Church rarely possesses military or economic means). Nye clearly states that NGOs are almost primary generators of soft power and the Church is one of the “traditional” NGOs that were present for centuries (he uses the example of the Roman Catholic Church). Even though we tend to associate soft power with states, the soft power theory emphasizes that governments have little control over the soft power that is usually associated with the country itself. The soft power of the Church (like other NGOs) does not have to be in line with the goals of one country’s foreign policy and can be exercised in order to pursue its individual goals or values. According to Nye’s theory, there are three primary sources of soft power: culture, political values and foreign policy. Activities of ROC put it primarily in the “culture” domain, as it represents values and practices that generate meaning. ROC appeals to shared Orthodox Christian values that remain attractive to Western Balkan Orthodox Christians. As mentioned prior, culture can be shared through a number of activities, such as exchanges, commerce, personal visits and contacts, which will be studied in depth in the context of ROC within the scope of this work. Religion is not limited to “high” and “popular” culture in terms of its outreach, as it can be equally appealing to representatives of consumers of both “layers” of culture, giving it a unique position and power over followers of the Church. Even though Orthodox Christianity seems to be a very specific niche and not a universally shared set of ideas and practices, the context makes it a powerful object of attraction, more precisely the context of the Balkans where Orthodox Christianity played a big role throughout history and where religion is still relevant. The mechanism behind the soft power coming from culture assumes that values, ideas, and policies that are reinforced by, in this case, ROC create attraction and duty that in turn can help achieve the desired outcome. The mechanism that is specifically employed by the ROC in the Balkans, as well as the previously described public diplomacy efforts, will be of primary interest for this work.



## **Methodology and sources**

Methodology used in this thesis consists of mostly qualitative analysis of relevant documents and sources, however, the mode in which this analysis is structured is tailored to the soft power theory, which allows us to identify the soft power manifestations. In order to do so, it is essential to consult official sources of information (Russian Orthodox Church) and select events and statements that correspond to the essential part of soft power – three levels of public diplomacy: daily communications, strategic communication and long-lasting relationships with individuals. The corresponding events will be quantified and qualitatively analyzed in the appropriate context, corresponding to the country in question. Consequently, the political outcomes will be traced by the previously identified strategic goals, which will also be qualitatively analyzed.

The sources used for this thesis are polls, censuses, official documents (laws, decisions), official websites and media outlets. This selection is dictated by the set research questions and is the most credible source of information needed to complete this research. For the purpose of uniformity for all countries addressed in this research, the main source of information regarding the activities of the Russian Orthodox Church is the official website of the Church. This choice is justified by the fact that this source is primary, therefore free from external interpretations that can skew the results of the research. In this form, the intent and strategic goals of the Church can be interpreted, including many other minor details that help paint the picture that would otherwise be missing.

## **Structure**

This thesis consists of four chapters, each dedicated to answering one of the research questions. The expected thesis outline is as presented below:

Chapter I “Religion in the Western Balkans”, will explore the religious background of the region, that will include historical dimension, census and polls analysis, that will give a context within which the Russian Orthodox Church is operating.

Chapter II “Eastern Orthodoxy and the Western Balkans”, will deal with the structure and status of relevant Orthodox Churches. This chapter has the function of exploring the actors involved in the soft power expressions of the Russian Orthodox Church, which should increase one’s understanding of the Orthodox Church hierarchy and processes, which in turn will make the subsequent chapters more informative.

Chapter III “Russian Orthodox Church in the Western Balkans – cultural soft power and public diplomacy” is aimed at analyzing the public diplomacy of the Russian Orthodox Church in the relevant countries. In this chapter, the bulk of relevant events is systematized and analyzed, presenting us with the strategy used by the Church in respective countries.

Chapter IV “The effect of Russian Orthodox Church's soft power on political outcomes in the Balkans” juxtaposes the decisions of the respective governments, as well as other forms of official communications channels to the strategic goals of the Church, identified in the previous chapter, thus measuring the effect of the Churches’ soft power in the Western Balkans.

Finally, the conclusion is serving the purpose of revisiting the research questions and delivering answers, as well as identifying trends and related topics for further research.

## I Religion in the Western Balkans

Religion is a factor that has shaped the history of all continents and countries, and it played and still plays the key role in the geopolitical orientation of the Balkans as a whole and in the Western Balkans specifically. Owing to its geographical position, Balkans were always at the crossroads of different religions, cultures and general influence, and this is the reason why Balkans are home for Catholic and Orthodox Christians and Muslims. To understand the processes occurring in the Orthodox communities in the Western Balkans, it is of utmost importance to understand the historical background and current ‘measurements’ of religious tendencies as well as the importance of religion for the population of the Western Balkans. This chapter will explore the aforementioned concepts and present the ‘religious map’ of the region, which will act as a base for further research of the designated topic.

Even before Slavic tribes reached the Balkans in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Balkans were already divided into two parts – one oriented towards Rome and the other towards Constantinople and this will later – after the Great Schism of 1054 - be the divide between the “Orthodox” (modern-day Montenegro, Serbia, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Albania)<sup>74</sup> and “Catholic” (modern-day Slovenia and Croatia) Balkans.<sup>75</sup> The several centuries that preceded the Ottoman rule, were characterized by multiple manifestations of Christianity that were under heavy scrutiny by both Catholic and Orthodox Churches. With the beginning of the Ottoman rule in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, the region was introduced to Islam which will play a major role in its history. The legacy of 500 years of subjugation to the Ottoman Empire is the presence of Islam alongside Christianity, the dynamic between which was the catalysator of many events in Balkan history. It is safe to say that the Turkish influence is visible today in many ways, in the language (the presence of more than 8,000 turcisms), in national cuisines, but most importantly, in religion and identity.<sup>76</sup> The countries with the highest percentage of the Muslim population in the Balkans are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, but every country in the region has a significant Muslim presence. Going back to the Ottoman rule, Turks introduced the millet system – the administrative system that was present

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<sup>74</sup> Speaking in terms of territory.

<sup>75</sup>Krijestorac, Mirsad. 2018. "Imposing Particular Identities: The Balkans As A Meeting Place Of Ethnicities And Religions". *Insight Turkey* 20 (3): 241-263. doi:10.25253/99.2018203.10. [https://www.insightturkey.com/articles/imposing-particular-identities-the-balkans-as-a-meeting-place-of-ethnicities-and-religions?fbclid=IwAR3RUN9M\\_Kei3yIkC8eiDixRkrzuG9kg-GGEimLUyjqM35jJUc2yr8wkESE](https://www.insightturkey.com/articles/imposing-particular-identities-the-balkans-as-a-meeting-place-of-ethnicities-and-religions?fbclid=IwAR3RUN9M_Kei3yIkC8eiDixRkrzuG9kg-GGEimLUyjqM35jJUc2yr8wkESE). Accessed on: 18.06.2022.

<sup>76</sup>"U Srpskom Jeziku Više Od 8. 000 Turcizama". 2011. *Novosti*. <https://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/aktuelno.69.html:341462-U-srpskom-jeziku-vise-od-8-000-turcizama>. Accessed on: 18.06.2022.

throughout the Empire that made the co-existence of Christians and Muslims possible (even though the ones who adopted the latter religion were not held in high regard by those who remained Christian).

As the Russian Empire led a campaign to gain access to the Black Sea throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, using every advantage it had against the Ottoman Empire was of great importance. Orthodox Christianity was the uniting factor against the Turks and used by Russia to encourage both Balkan nations and Orthodox Russians to support the “liberation” of Balkan Christians. This fed the sense of “brotherhood” between Orthodox Christians on both sides and solidified the positive image of Russia among the members of the Orthodox Church. For almost a century (1774 – 1856) Russia maintained the right of patronage and protection of Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire according to the Kuchuk-Kainarji Treaty.<sup>77</sup> What can be seen as the pinnacle of this anti-Ottoman campaign are the First and Second Balkan Wars (1912 – 1913) which saw the long-expected liberation from Ottoman rule.<sup>78</sup> The next significant period in the history of religious movements in the region was the Yugoslav era, during which atheism was the “religion” supported by the state, which attempted to suppress religious differences through the creation of a “universal” identity.<sup>79</sup>

After the heavy events of the 90s, it was evident that the religious factor never really subsided, even though it was dormant for several decades. Today religion plays a big role in the identities of Balkan (specifically Western) nations. According to the accepted notion, Western Balkans encompass the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Serbia.<sup>80</sup> The importance of religious factors nowadays (and with it the assumed attractiveness of Churches including ROC) in the aforementioned countries is supported by several studies that clearly demonstrate the “religiousness” of Western Balkan nations, which is at a far greater level compared to

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<sup>77</sup> Терзич Славенко. "Россия и первая Балканская война" Слово.ру: Балтийский акцент, no. 3-4, 2014, pp. 95-104. <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/rossiya-i-pervaya-balkanskaya-voyna>. Accessed on: 18.06/2022

<sup>78</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Balkan Wars summary." Encyclopedia Britannica, April 14, 2003. <https://www.britannica.com/summary/Balkan-Wars>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

<sup>79</sup>Krijestorac, Mirsad. 2018. "Imposing Particular Identities: The Balkans As A Meeting Place Of Ethnicities And Religions". Insight Turkey 20 (3): 241-263. doi:10.25253/99.2018203.10. [https://www.insightturkey.com/articles/imposing-particular-identities-the-balkans-as-a-meeting-place-of-ethnicities-and-religions?fbclid=IwAR3RUN9M\\_Kei3ylkC8eiDixRkrzuG9kg-GGEimLUyjqM35jJUc2yr8wkESE](https://www.insightturkey.com/articles/imposing-particular-identities-the-balkans-as-a-meeting-place-of-ethnicities-and-religions?fbclid=IwAR3RUN9M_Kei3ylkC8eiDixRkrzuG9kg-GGEimLUyjqM35jJUc2yr8wkESE). Accessed on: 18.06.2022.

<sup>80</sup>"Western Balkans". 2022. European Commission. [https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/europe-world/international-cooperation/western-balkans\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/europe-world/international-cooperation/western-balkans_en). Accessed on: 18.06.2022.

Western European countries.<sup>81</sup> According to three WIN/Gallup International polls conducted over years, citizens of Kosovo and North Macedonia proved to be the most religious both in the region and in Europe (88% and 83% respectively of questioned citizens consider themselves religious). Between 70% and 72% of Montenegrins and Serbs consider themselves religious, with Bosnians scoring 65% for the same parameter. Albania is probably the least religious country in the Western Balkan region, with 39% of the population considers itself religious.<sup>82</sup> These numbers show that religion still holds its power in these societies and within individuals, which creates a favourable context for anyone who wants to exercise its soft power by appealing to the religious feelings of the believers in these Western Balkan countries. Several related studies were conducted by the Pew Research Centre, however, it is important to point out that in the studies related to the Western Balkan region, Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Kosovo were not included, which makes the results of the studies slightly skewed in the context of this thesis. Another important note is that Kosovo and Albania will not be the subject of the detailed analysis due to the fact that they do not have large Orthodox Christian communities, which will be elaborated on further. Nevertheless, with two countries (Montenegro and North Macedonia) that remain out of the scope of these surveys, it is safe to say that due to the small size of the countries and many similarities with Serbia in terms of religiousness (percentages of religious populations as presented by the WIN/Gallup International polls), these studies can be accepted as they offer important insights about the region. The study titled “Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe” conducted in 2017 shows that 78% of Serbians consider Orthodox Christianity an integral part of their identity (compared with 57% for that in Russia; Appendix 3).<sup>83</sup> Another interesting fact is that in contrast to the overall religiosity “score”, a mere 6% of Orthodox Christians in Serbia attend church weekly (the same percentage is true for Russians) and a slightly larger proportion of Orthodox Bosnians - 10% - are attending church on a weekly basis. Interestingly enough, 54% of Bosnian Catholics are attending church on a weekly basis (Appendix 4).<sup>84</sup> These findings might indicate that the Orthodox Church does not have a solid base in the everyday life of

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<sup>81</sup>Tanner, Marcus. 2018. "Religion Remains Powerful In Balkans, Survey Shows". Balkan Insight. <https://balkaninsight.com/2018/01/15/religion-remains-powerful-in-balkans-survey-shows-01-15-2018/>. Accessed on: 18.06.2022.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>"Religious Belief And National Belonging In Central And Eastern Europe". 2017. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

its followers, but these assumptions will be tested further. Within the scope of the same study, it was observed that 80% of Serbs agreed with the statement that Russia has the role of counterbalancing the West, and 55% of Bosnians did the same (Appendix 5).<sup>85</sup> The status of Patriarch of Moscow was also significantly more favourable in comparison to the status of Patriarch of Constantinople, with 29% Orthodox Bosnians supporting the former compared to the 8% for the latter and 18% and 4% of Orthodox Serbs in the same order. It is important to point out that 56% of Orthodox Serbs expressed their support for their (Serbian) patriarch, which is significantly more compared to the support of both Russian and Constantinople patriarchs (Appendix 6).<sup>86</sup> 74% of Serbs also agreed with the statement that Russia has the obligation to protect Orthodox Christians outside its borders (with 72% of Russian agreeing with the same statement; Appendix 7), whereas (in the scope of another study titled “Orthodox Christians in Central and Eastern Europe favour strong role for Russia in geopolitics, religion”) 50% of Bosnians consider this statement to be true.<sup>87</sup> Finally, 58% of Orthodox Serbs stated that they believe that the Church should have financial support from the government (whereas 50% of Russians agreed with this statement; Appendix 8).<sup>88</sup>

To complete the “religious map” of the selected Western Balkan countries, it can prove useful to consider the religious composition of these states by addressing the latest available census data by country. Since the focus of this study is Orthodox Christians, Kosovo and Albanian populations will be excluded as they have the Muslim majority. Kosovo’s population, judging from the 2011 census (the last one conducted in the country as of July 2022), consisted of 95,6% Muslims, 2,2% Catholics and 1,49% Orthodox Christians.<sup>89</sup> In Albania, on the other hand, in compliance with the census from 2011, 56,7% of the population was Muslim, 10,03% were Catholics, 2,09% Bektashi, and 6,75% were Orthodox Christians.<sup>90</sup> Assuming that the absence of the targeted population in these countries would

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.; Diamant, Jeff. 2017. "Orthodox Christians In Central And Eastern Europe Favor Strong Role For Russia In Geopolitics, Religion". Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/05/11/orthodox-christians-in-central-and-eastern-europe-favor-strong-role-for-russia-in-geopolitics-religion/>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> "Kosovo Population And Housing Census 2011". 2011. Kosovo Agency Of Statistics. 62 [https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/2075/final-results\\_eng.pdf](https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/2075/final-results_eng.pdf). Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

<sup>90</sup> "Population And Housing Census". 2011. Instat. 71 [http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3058/main\\_results\\_population\\_and\\_housing\\_census\\_2011.pdf](http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3058/main_results_population_and_housing_census_2011.pdf). Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

not stimulate the ROC to pursue exercising its soft power, these two countries will not be considered in the context of this thesis.

According to the latest census conducted in Serbia in 2011 (the last one conducted as of July 2022), 84,59% of the population stated that they associated with Orthodox Christianity, in comparison to 4,87% that stated that they were Catholics and 3,10% who stated that they were Muslims.<sup>91</sup> When it comes to Montenegro, according to the census from the same year (2011)<sup>92</sup>, 72,02% of the population stated that they are Orthodox Christians, the next largest community were Muslims who represent 15,97% of the population and lastly, Catholics who make up 3,44% of the population.<sup>93</sup> North Macedonia had 46,14% Orthodox population in 2021, compared to 32,17% of the Muslim population and a mere 0,42% of the population that identified as Catholic.<sup>94</sup> Finally, the religious composition of BiH, according to the census conducted in 2013<sup>95</sup>, was as follows: 50,7% of the population declared themselves as Muslims, 30,75% stated that they identify themselves as Orthodox Christians and 15,19% were Catholics.<sup>96</sup> This indicates that BiH has the Muslim majority and with that would be excluded from the list of countries of interest for this study, however, the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of two entities - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (51% of the territory) and Republika Srpska (49% of the territory) – gives us the opportunity to “isolate” Republika Srpska, with the Orthodox Christian majority and include it in the scope of the study. According to a census conducted in 2013 in Republika Srpska, 82,82% of the population declared that they adhere to the Orthodox Church, 12,77% were Muslims and 2,20% were Catholics.<sup>97</sup> To sum up, the countries in the Western Balkan region with an Orthodox majority, as was shown by the census data are Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia (with the smallest proportion) and Republika Srpska.

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<sup>91</sup>"Etnokonfesionalni I Jezički Mozaik Srbije". 2011. 144  
<https://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2015/Pdf/G20154001.pdf>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

<sup>92</sup> The last census was conducted in 2011, as of July 2022.

<sup>93</sup>"Popis Stanovništva, Domaćinstava I Stanova U Crnoj Gori 2011. Godine". 2011. Monstat.Org. 15  
[https://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje\(1\).pdf](https://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje(1).pdf). Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

<sup>94</sup>Чанчаревиќ, Огнен Чанчаревиќ. 2022. „,Попис 2021“: За 20 Години Северна Македонија Со 185 Илјади Граѓани Помалку". ВОА. <https://mk.voanews.com/a/6508052.html>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

<sup>95</sup> The last census was conducted in 2013, as of July 2022.

<sup>96</sup>"Rezultati Popisa: U BiH Živi 3.531.159 Stanovnika". 2016. Balkans.Aljazeera.Net.  
<https://balkans.aljazeera.net/news/balkan/2016/6/29/bih-danas-rezultati-popisa-iz-2013-godine>. Accessed on: 20.06.2022.

<sup>97</sup>"Popis Stanovništva, Domaćinstava I Stanova U Republici Srpskoj 2013. Godine". 2013. 163.  
[https://www.rzs.rs.ba/static/uploads/bilteni/popis/gradovi\\_opstine\\_naseljena\\_mjesta/Rezultati\\_Popisa\\_2013\\_Gradovi\\_Opstine\\_Naseljena\\_Mjesta\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.rzs.rs.ba/static/uploads/bilteni/popis/gradovi_opstine_naseljena_mjesta/Rezultati_Popisa_2013_Gradovi_Opstine_Naseljena_Mjesta_WEB.pdf). Accessed on: 20.06.2022.

To conclude the description of both the historical and religious background of the region, it is safe to say that many empires shaped what we know today as Western Balkans. Russia played a pivotal role in the lives of Orthodox Christians living under Ottoman rule that was based on Islam. Even though Russia's patronage was fuelled by the desire to weaken the Ottoman Empire and consequently secure access to the Black Sea, this effort created an image of Russia as a protector of Orthodox Christians, an image which is still relevant as seen through multiple surveys. In the modern world, where religion is less relevant in the "collective West", Balkan countries are one of the most religious ones, where a significant percentage of the population states that they consider themselves religious. The average percentage of the religious population, for the region encompassing 6 countries (Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, North Macedonia, BiH and Kosovo), is 70%, which makes the religious factor quite significant as it has the power to mobilize masses and can be used for other political purposes. Judging by the available census data, it can be established that Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Republika Srpska have an Orthodox majority, averaging 70% of the population. As for Kosovo and Albania, the census data made it clear that these two entities have a Muslim majority, therefore they can be omitted in the context of this study. The formerly addressed studies showed that Orthodoxy plays a significant role in national identity (Serbia), but also that only a small proportion of the population attends church on a weekly basis. The image of Russia as the force counterbalancing the West was also supported by Serbs and Bosnians and the status of the Patriarch of Moscow was always higher compared to the same Patriarch of Constantinople in these two countries (with greater support from their local patriarchs, especially in Serbia). Lastly, both Serbs and Bosnians (higher percentages) agreed that Russia has the obligation to protect Orthodox Christians abroad, which is the image that (hypothetically) persisted ever since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Even though Montenegro and North Macedonia were not a part of the addressed studies, it is safe to assume that the Orthodox majority countries are primed for the influence of ROC and are susceptible to its soft power.



## II Eastern Orthodoxy and the Western Balkans

Orthodox Churches in the Western Balkans play a major role in public matters and especially in matters of national identity, and oftentimes political and geopolitical decisions. The status of Orthodox Churches and their relations with other canonical Churches plays an important role in the context of this research, therefore it will be briefly addressed in order to better understand the context within which the ROC is acting in. In this chapter, all the acting Orthodox Churches will be discussed, as well as the ROC, including their status, structure and outreach.

### 2.1 Russian Orthodox Church

The beginning of the ROC Orthodox Church can be traced to the 10th century (988) and now represents a sophisticated institution that has over 90 million followers.<sup>98</sup> At the top of the ROC is the Moscow Patriarchate, which according to the ROC constitution has several other sub-divisions that deal with specific tasks, such as the Department of external Church relations (chapter VIII, article 6).<sup>99</sup> Institutions of the ROC encompass the Holy Synod, Council of Bishops, the Church Court (the highest judicial authority), the Local Council (that is choosing the Patriarch and granting autocephaly, autonomy or self-governance to parts of the ROC), and Supreme Church Council (the highest executive body). According to the constitution of the ROC, Holy Synod is the governing body of the ROC Orthodox Church between Councils of Bishops, which in turn can be defined as the highest governing body that has a number of responsibilities including regulating internal and external matters, as well as mainlining relations with other Orthodox Churches, governments representatives of other religions (chapter III, article 1).<sup>100</sup> Among other things, the Holy Synod is responsible for “maintaining unity with the other Orthodox Churches, organizing the internal and external activities of the Church and dealing with issues of church-wide significance; assessment of the most important developments in inter-church, inter-confessional and inter-religious relations; maintaining inter-confessional and inter-religious relations, both within and outside the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate; maintaining proper relations

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<sup>98</sup>Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Russian Orthodox Church." Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Russian-Orthodox-Church>. Accessed on: 20.06.2022.

<sup>99</sup>"Глава VIII. Московская Патриархия И Синодальные Учреждения / Официальные Документы / Патриархия.Ru". 2022. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/133128.html>. Accessed on: 20.06.2022.

<sup>100</sup>"Глава III. Архиерейский Собор / Официальные Документы / Патриархия.Ru". 2022. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/133124.html>. Accessed on: 20.06.2022.

between the Church and the State in accordance with these Statutes and the law in force” (chapter V, article 25).<sup>101</sup> The head of the Moscow Patriarchate is the Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus'. Since 2009 this position has been held by Patriarch Kirill and prior to him, it was held by Patriarch Aleksii II (from 1990 to 2008).<sup>102</sup>

The next administrative unit of the ROC is metropolitanate (rus. - *митрополия*) with the Metropolitan (rus. – *митрополит*) being at the chair of this administrative unit. Metropolitanate consists of several eparchies (rus. – *епархия*) that are headed by an archbishop or bishop (rus. – *архиепископ, епископ*).<sup>103</sup> The eparchy, in turn, is subdivided into deaneries (rus. – *благочиния*). Deaneries are headed by specially appointed priests, who are known as deaneries (rus. – *благочинные*). Within a deanery there are Orthodox parishes (rus. – *православные приходы*), the number of which is determined by the number of churches. A parish is headed by a priest (rus. – *священник*).<sup>104</sup>

Other than the territory of the Russian Federation, ROC has many eparchies across the globe that are organized under the ROC Abroad. These are self-governing Churches and are present in Germany, the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South America.<sup>105</sup> The ROC Abroad reunited with the ROC in 2007, after eight decades of parallel existence, thus becoming officially recognized by the ROC as its integral part.<sup>106</sup> In addition to these, ROC has multiple institutions at lower administrative levels. These include the Korean Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission (ROCOR), Patriarchal District of Parishes of the ROC in Turkmenistan, Moscow Patriarchate Parishes in the Italian Republic, Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem and in the context of the work the most interesting -

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<sup>101</sup> "Глава V. Священный Синод / Официальные Документы / Патриархия.Ru". 2022. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/133126.html>. Accessed on: 20.06.2022.

<sup>102</sup>"Святейший Патриарх Московский И Всея Руси Кирилл". Pravoslavie.Ru. <https://pravoslavie.ru/83730.html>. Accessed on: 20.06.2022.; "Алексий II, Патриарх Московский И Всея Руси (Ридигер Алексей Михайлович)". Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/54129.html>. Accessed on: 20.06.2022.

<sup>103</sup>Камедина, Людмила Васильевна. Русская православная церковь: структура, литургическая символика. - Чита : Палитра, 2013. 10. (39)

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup>"Русская Православная Церковь Заграницей (РПЦЗ) / Организации / Патриархия.Ru". 2022. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/245344.html>. Accessed on: 20.06.2022.

<sup>106</sup> "Обращение Архиерейского Синода К Боголюбивой Пастве Русской Православной Церкви Заграницей / Официальные Документы / Патриархия.Ru". 2006. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/140096.html>. Accessed on: 04.07.2022.; Pešić, M. 2007. "Ujedinjuju Se Dve Ruske Pravoslavne Crkve". Politika Online. <https://www.politika.rs/sr/clanak/25929/Ujedinjuju-se-dve-ruske-pravoslavne-crkve>. Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

Holy Trinity Church and Iberian Chapel in Belgrade (a branch of the ROC).<sup>107</sup> The church was founded by Russian emigrants at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in 1946 the church received the status of a branch of the ROC in Belgrade and was part of the Stavropegial deanery of Russian Orthodox parishes on the territory of Yugoslavia. In 1954 this deanery was abolished and all temples belonging to it except Troitsky in Belgrade were put under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church. By 2007 it was completely renovated, after it was damaged in the NATO bombing and the church was consecrated by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad (now Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia), Chairman of the External Church Relations Department of the Moscow Patriarchate.<sup>108</sup> The example of this church represents, at large, how ROC and Serbian Orthodox Church interacted over time and showcases the importance of the Serbian Orthodox Church for ROC and vice versa. The fact that ROC gave Serbian Orthodox Church all existing parishes that once belonged to it also showcases the link between them.

## 2.2 Serbian Orthodox Church

Mass baptism of Serbs occurred in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, as part of the Byzantine effort to spread Christianity to incoming barbaric tribes, among which were Serbs.<sup>109</sup> The Serbian Patriarchate was founded on Easter 1346, elevating the Serbian archbishopric in order to legitimize the desire of King Dušan to be crowned emperor.<sup>110</sup> Institutions of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) resemble those of the ROC and include the Patriarch (from 1990 to 2009 Patriarch Pavle was the head of SPC and from 2010 to 2020 Patriarch Irinej held this position, now the Patriarch of SPC is Porfirije), Holy Council (Sabor) of Archbishops, Holy Synod of Archbishops, Great Church Court, Patriarchal Board of Elders and Patriarchal council.<sup>111</sup> According to the constitution of the SOC, Patriarch is the head of the Church and has a number of functions that are more representative by nature (section II, article 55).<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>107</sup>"Зарубежные Учреждения / Организации / Патриархия.Ru". 2022. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/organizations/139244/>. Accessed on: 21.06.2022.

<sup>108</sup> "Храм Святой Троицы И Иверская Часовня В Белграде (Подворье Русской Православной Церкви) / Организации / Патриархия.Ru". 2022. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/4547484.html>. Accessed on: 21.06.2022.

<sup>109</sup> Ljubomir Maksimović, „Pokršta vanje Srba i Hrvata“, Zbornik radova Viyantološkog instituta 35, 1996. 161.

<sup>110</sup>Gastgeber, Christian, Ekaterini Mitsiou, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, and Vratislav Zervan. 2021. "A Companion To The Patriarchate Of Constantinople", 168. doi:10.1163/9789004424470.168

<sup>111</sup> "Српска Православна Црква [Званични Сајт]". Arhiva.Spc.Rs. <http://arhiva.spc.rs/sr/crkva>. Accessed on: 23.06.2022.

<sup>112</sup>"Устав Српске Православне Цркве". 1957. Projuris.Org. [https://projuris.org/RETROLEX/Ustav%20Srpske%20pravoslavne%20crkve%20\(1947\).pdf](https://projuris.org/RETROLEX/Ustav%20Srpske%20pravoslavne%20crkve%20(1947).pdf). Accessed on: 23.06.2022.

The Holy Council (Sabor) of Archbishops is presided by the Patriarch. This body is the highest in the hierarchy, and the ecclesiastical legislative authority in matters of religion, worship, ecclesiastical order and internal organization of the Church, as well as the supreme judicial authority. It has a number of responsibilities among which are: looking over the work of the Holy Synod; regulating the relationship between the SOC and the Serbian government; “governing the internal and external mission of the Church for the purpose of strengthening, defending and spreading the Orthodox faith and the purity of Christian morality” (section II, article 69).<sup>113</sup> The Holy Synod of Archbishops is the highest executive (administrative and supervisory) institution, as well as the judicial authority within its jurisdiction (section II, article 70).<sup>114</sup> The Holy Synod of Archbishops (under the presidency of the Patriarch) has similar functions to the Holy Council, but is lower in the hierarchy of SOC institutions. Among other things, it decides upon the regular and extraordinary convocation of the Holy Council and is overlooking the matters of internal and external missions of the church, as well as strengthening ties and unification with other Orthodox Churches (section II, article 70).<sup>115</sup> The Great Church Court is the highest ecclesiastical judicial authority (section II, article 71), and the Patriarchal Board of Elders is the supreme executive (administrative and supervisory) authority over church-self-governing bodies. This body publishes and executes the decrees and decisions of the Holy Synod, and supervises self-governing church bodies in their work, manages funds, endowments and assets (section II, article 91). There is also the Patriarchal council, that is dealing with financial issues concerning the Church (section II, article 81).<sup>116</sup>

SOC is organized in a similar manner to the ROC and consists of an archbishopric (the Archbishopric of Belgrade-Karlovci), four metropolitanates (Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral, Metropolitanate of Dabar Bosna, Metropolitanate of Zagreb-Ljubljana, Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand) and 34 eparchies (or dioceses) across the globe, with the most important ones outside Serbia (within the scope of this work) being the Diocese of Banja Luka, Diocese of Budimlje-Niksic, Diocese of Zvornik-Tuzla, Diocese of Zahumlje-Herzegovina, Diocese of Bihac-Petrovac (Appendix 9).<sup>117</sup> The

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<sup>113</sup>Ibid.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> "Eparhije SPC - Lista Eparhijskih Portala". 2022. Српска Православна Црква. <https://spc.rs/en/eparhijespc-lista-eparhijskih-portala/>. Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

structure of the SOC clearly indicates that its jurisdiction extends beyond the borders of Serbia. One notable institution within the scope of the Archbishopric of Belgrade-Karlovci is The Courtyard of SOC in Moscow, that plays an important role in relations between the two Churches.<sup>118</sup> It is also worth noting that the SOC is also the main Orthodox Church in BiH (mainly Republika Srpska), especially because Orthodox Christians in the country consider themselves ethnic Serbs.

## 2.3 Montenegrin Orthodox Church

The existence of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church is one of the most disputed topics in the Orthodox community in the Western Balkans and beyond. Montenegrin Orthodox Church (MOC) remains canonically unrecognized and its problematic relations with SOC and its followers are just another element of a significantly bigger issue of Montenegrin identity and its relationship with the idea of “Serbhood”.<sup>119</sup> As with any conflict, there are two sides who interpret the history of both Montenegro and the Orthodox Church differently, with possible involvement of some political interests. One side, which is protecting the autocephaly (independence) of MOC, claims that the Church was independent until it was forcibly re-joined with SPC and Serbia together with the Kingdom of Montenegro as a whole, in 1918.<sup>120</sup> The Church was re-established in 1993 in Cetinje – the former capital of Montenegro.<sup>121</sup> To support their claims, the proponents of the MOC are referring to the Fund of documents of the Ministry of Education and Church Affairs of the Principality and Kingdom of Montenegro (folder 110) that is located in the Archives of Montenegro as well as other sources that clearly state that MOC was autocephalous.<sup>122</sup> The other side of the conflict claims that MOC never legally gained independence, as they never fulfilled all the requirements to do so. There are two requirements to gain autocephaly: to have an independent leader and to gain permission from the ‘mother’ Church, which in this case was

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<sup>118</sup>Подворье Сербской Православной Церкви. Официальный сайт. <http://serbskoe-podvorie.ru/>. Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

<sup>119</sup>Andelković, Nataša. 2022. "Kako Je Biti Episkop Crnogorske Pravoslavne Crkve I Kakav Je Položaj Nepriznatih Crkava Na Balkanu - BBC News Na Srpskom". BBC News Na Srpskom. <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/balkan-60024994>. Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

<sup>120</sup>Jovanović, Slobodan. 2016. "Pravoslavna Crkva U Crnoj Gori". Maticacrnogorska.Me. 51-52. <http://www.maticacrnogorska.me/files/68/05%20slobodan%20jovanovic.pdf>. Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

<sup>121</sup>Arbutina, Zoran. 2020. "Crnogorska Kvadratura (Crkvenog) Kruga". DW.COM. <https://www.dw.com/bs/crnogorska-kvadratura-crkvenog-kruga/a-52024528>. Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

<sup>122</sup>Adžić, Novak. "Pregršt dokaza da je Crnogorska Pravoslavna Crkva bila autokefalna". Montenegrina.Net.[http://montenegrina.net/pages/pages1/religija/dokazi\\_autokefalnosti\\_cg\\_crkve\\_n\\_adzic.htm](http://montenegrina.net/pages/pages1/religija/dokazi_autokefalnosti_cg_crkve_n_adzic.htm). Accessed on: 04.07.2022.; "Crnogorska Pravoslavna Crkva - Istorija". 2010.Cpc.Org.Me. [http://2010.cpc.org.me/latinica/istorija\\_crkva.php?id=1](http://2010.cpc.org.me/latinica/istorija_crkva.php?id=1). Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

the Patriarchy of Peć, which was abolished in 1766, which made the MOC self-proclaimed.<sup>123</sup> The question of Montenegrin identity is still central to this issue, as sources of multiple centuries used the terms “Serbs”, “Montenegrins” and oftentimes “Orthodox” interchangeably. This side of the conflict also considers the year 1993 the year of the foundation of the MOC, as opposed to the year of re-establishment and consider this event as highly politicized.<sup>124</sup>

The Church at the moment does not possess any of the traditional bodies and has several monks and 25 priests.<sup>125</sup> Only 10% of the Orthodox Christians in Montenegro adhere to MOC as of 2020.<sup>126</sup> This Church remains unrecognized by all canonical Churches, including the ROC that openly supports the Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral of SOC and openly speaks against the MOC.<sup>127</sup>

The adoption of the law on religious communities in Montenegro in 2019 became one of the most disputed initiatives that mobilized the religious population in the country and beyond. It was adopted and signed by President Milo Đukanović on December 27, 2019, causing discontent among citizens and, consequently, mass protests in a number of cities in the country, which stopped only because of the coronavirus pandemic.<sup>128</sup> The reason for this outcry is Article 52 of this law, which states that the state appropriates all sacred objects unless the religious community can prove that these objects were in their possession before December 1, 1918 (when Montenegro became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes).<sup>129</sup> This law caused protests in Belgrade, and the ROC also stated that the law "is

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<sup>123</sup>Jevtić, Miroljub. 2020. "Da li je Crkva u Crnoj Gori ikada bila autokefalna". Politika Online. <https://www.politika.rs/sr/clanak/449105/Kolumnisti/Da-li-je-crkva-u-Crnoj-Gori-ikada-bila-autokefalna>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>124</sup>Hilton Saggau, E. 2017. The self-proclaimed Montenegrin Orthodox Church: A paper tiger or a resurgent church? In M. Blagojevic, & Z. Matic (Eds.), Religion in Contemporary Society. Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Education and Culture, Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Branicevo, Pozarevac. 31-54. [https://curis.ku.dk/portal/files/188918214/The\\_Montenegrin\\_Orthodox\\_Church\\_A\\_paper\\_tiger.pdf](https://curis.ku.dk/portal/files/188918214/The_Montenegrin_Orthodox_Church_A_paper_tiger.pdf). Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>125</sup>Andelković, Nataša. 2022. "Kako Je Biti Episkop Crnogorske Pravoslavne Crkve I Kakav Je Položaj Nepriznatih Crkava Na Balkanu - BBC News Na Srpskom". BBC News Na Srpskom. <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/balkan-60024994>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>126</sup>"Vjerska Struktura U Crnoj Gori". 2020. Radio Slobodna Evropa. <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/religija-vjeroispovjesterna-gora-srpska-pravoslavna-crkva-crnogorska/31006155.html>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>127</sup> Jovičević, Biljana. 2007. "Ruske Primjedbe Na Crnogorski Ustav". Radio Slobodna Evropa. <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/699634.html>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>128</sup> Crna Gora: Počela primjena Zakona o slobodi vjeroispovijesti. 2020. ALJEZEERA Balkans. <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/crna-gora-pocela-primjena-zakona-o-slobodi-vjeroispovijesti>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>129</sup>"Nacrt Zakona O Slobodi Vjeroispovijesti". Vlada Crne Gore. <https://www.gov.me/dokumenta/ef2ba50b-d771-46fd-a283-1e34c3ddd89a>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

aimed at alienating the centuries-old historical memory of the people, the spiritual tradition they inherited from their fathers".<sup>130</sup> As of 2022, the Montenegrin government is working on resolving the existing issues with both Orthodox Churches, which will be a difficult task.<sup>131</sup>

## 2.4 Macedonian Orthodox Church

Macedonian Orthodox Church can be considered a somewhat recent 'phenomena' in the context of history. Unlike the Catholic Church, where the role of the Pope is above all the national attributes, Orthodox Church doesn't have this type of authority that will rise above all. This is why the problem with national Churches is so evident in the Western Balkans, that had turbulent history and many unresolved questions concerning nationalities.<sup>132</sup> After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Macedonian Christians were part of the SOC, until 1959, when the Yugoslav government encouraged the creation of an independent Macedonian Church to help solidify Macedonian national identity. In the beginning, this initiative was supported by the SOC, only to later recognize this decision as a big mistake, starting a long period of conflict.<sup>133</sup> In 1967, the Macedonian Orthodox Church announced its independence and proclaimed itself as the legitimate inheritor of the SOC Ohrid Archbishopric.<sup>134</sup> There were several attempts to resolve this issue and in 2002, after unsuccessful negotiations on the Niš agreement aimed at unifying the two entities, SPC announced the creation of the Ohrid Archbishopric outside the Macedonian Orthodox Church, essentially creating a parallel one.<sup>135</sup> The Macedonian Orthodox Church remained canonically unrecognized as autocephalous. On the other hand, the Macedonian government offered full support to their Church and didn't recognize the SOC branch acting on its territory, criminalizing any support offered to this entity.<sup>136</sup> ROC was eager to be a mediator

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<sup>130</sup> РИЦ назвала циничным закон о свободе вероисповедания в Черногории. 2020. Коммерсант <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4213897> Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>131</sup> "RSE: Temeljni Ugovor Sa SPC Drma Temelje Vlade Crne Gore". 2022. Vijesti.Me. <https://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/politika/610377/rse-temeljni-ugovor-sa-spc-drma-temelje-vlade-crne-gore>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>132</sup>Ljupčo Risteski. "Recognition of the Independance of the Macedonian Orthodox Church (Moc) as an Issue Concerning Macedonian National Identity". EthnoAnthropoZoom / ЕтноАнтропоЗум 6:145-185. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=68056The> 153-155

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup>Cepreganov, Todor, Maja Angelovska-Panova, and Dragan Zajkovski. 2014. "The Macedonian Orthodox Church". Eastern Christianity And Politics In The Twenty-Fi Rst Century. 428-429. (810)

<sup>136</sup>Janković, Marija. 2022. "SPC Dala Saglasnost Za Samostalnost Makedonske Pravoslavne Crkve - BBC News Na Srpskom". BBC News Na Srpskom. <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/balkan-61509904>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

in this conflict, suggesting the Macedonian Orthodox Church accept the status of an autonomous Church, rather than autocephalous (pursuing its own goals, considering the canonical separation with the Ukrainian Church).<sup>137</sup> In 2011, Ecumenical Patriarchate attempted to help restore the negotiations between the two Churches.

In May 2022, SOC approved the request of the Macedonian Orthodox Church for independence or autocephaly. Some interpret this move as acknowledgement and giving independence to the Macedonian Church, however within the scope of the SOC.<sup>138</sup> The Russian Orthodox Church has supported this decision of the SOC together with the Patriarchate of Constantinople.<sup>139</sup> Even though this is a significant improvement in the relationship between the two Churches, the dialogue has just begun, and the canonical status of the Macedonian Orthodox Church is yet to be finalized.

Lastly, it is important to briefly address the structure of the Macedonian Orthodox Church as well as its outreach. The Church has 11 dioceses (eparchies) 8 of which are on the territory of North Macedonia, and the remaining three are in Europe, Australia and US and Canada.<sup>140</sup> As other canonical Churches, the Church has all the traditional institutions including the Holy Synod and the Macedonian Church-People's Council (Sobor).<sup>141</sup>

To summarize, the Orthodox Churches in the Western Balkans are involved in processes of 'nation-building', at least in countries like Montenegro and North Macedonia. The strongest presence in the region belongs to the SOC, which has been the main Orthodox Church, that has been the main Orthodox Church in the region for many centuries. While 'new' Churches fight for their autonomy and independence as national churches of their respective states, the SOC appeals to historical circumstances and refuses to limit its scope. It is evident that the ROC plays a significant role in the region's 'Orthodox' matters, and in

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<sup>137</sup>Cepreganov, Todor, Maja Angelovska-Panova, and Dragan Zajkovski. 2014. "The Macedonian Orthodox Church". *Eastern Christianity And Politics In The Twenty-First Century*. pg. 428-429. (810)

<sup>138</sup>Janković, Marija. 2022. "SPC Dala Saglasnost Za Samostalnost Makedonske Pravoslavne Crkve - BBC News Na Srpskom". *BBC News Na Srpskom*. <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/balkan-61509904>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>139</sup>"Эксперт: Македонская Церковь Вернулась В Состав СПЦ Под Именем Охридской Архиепископии". 2022. Tass.Ru. [https://tass.ru/obschestvo/14638261?utm\\_source=google.com&utm\\_medium=organic&utm\\_campaign=google.com&utm\\_referrer=google.com](https://tass.ru/obschestvo/14638261?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com). Accessed on: 05.07.2022.; "В РПЦ Отреагировали На Признание Македонской Церкви Со Стороны Сербской". 2022. РИА Новости. <https://ria.ru/20220516/tserkov-1788844909.html>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>140</sup>"Kratok Istorijat Na Crkovnoto Prashanje Vo R. Makedonija". 2022. Mpc.Org.Mk. <http://www.mpc.org.mk/MPC/eparhii.asp>. Accessed on: 05.07.2022.

<sup>141</sup>"Македонска Православна Црква". 2022. [https://www.m-p-c.org/?page\\_id=15](https://www.m-p-c.org/?page_id=15). Accessed on: 05.07.2022.



both cases – Montenegrin and North Macedonian backs up the decisions and actions of the SOC. The SOC has an undeniable advantage in BiH, or more precisely Republika Srpska, as the Orthodox population, coincidentally ethnic Serbs, didn't make a request for a separate Church, at least as of now. One can make an assumption that, as the SOC has the highest outreach and the longest tradition in the region, the ROC would choose the SOC to be its main ally and be the vessel or an object of their soft power policies. Lastly, the problematic status of the Montenegrin and North Macedonian Orthodox Churches as well as their relation to the SOC gives a lot of space for the ROC to interfere, directly or indirectly. The following chapters will focus on the mechanism that the ROC uses in order to exercise its soft power in the Western Balkans.

### **III Russian Orthodox Church in the Western Balkans – cultural soft power and public diplomacy**

In order to understand the nature of interactions between the ROC and the Western Balkan countries in question, one can use the soft power theory to assess the influence the ROC has on the region. According to the soft power theory, there are three sources of soft power (that, in turn, relies on the attraction it generates): culture, political values and foreign policy. ROC, presumably appeals to the cultural dimension of soft power, meaning that it uses its most appealing attributes (values) to attract people and with that desired political outcome. The soft power theory assumes that soft power is very dispersed, meaning that it is usually outside the government's control, which allows us to view the ROC as an individual actor pursuing goals that don't necessarily need to be goals of the Russian government, but nonetheless can be. Commerce, exchanges, in-person meetings, and contacts are a few ways that culture can be shared. The mechanism that is employed to achieve "attraction", according to the theory, is so-called "public diplomacy" which has three layers: daily communications, strategic communication and long-lasting relationships with individuals. These three aspects will be at the core of this chapter. The first layer can be assessed by reviewing any outlets used by the ROC and relevant institutions, where the ROC will be elaborating on its decisions. The second layer can be analyzed by finding a common 'thread' for a number of events that might have a single purpose – to support the relevant topics (according to the ROC) or a certain cause. Lastly, the third layer can be evaluated by tracking the close relationships the ROC has with important individuals in their respective countries. As it was stated previously, the timeline for this assessment will be from December 2005 to August 2014, with 2005 being the year when North Macedonia received a EU candidate status, and by that becoming the first Western Balkan country to do so and presumably commence the intensification of ROCs activities in the region. The upper limit of the timeline – 2014, was taken as it represents the date when Russia began its conflict with Ukraine, which starts another geopolitical process that is still unveiling. The fact that the effects of soft power can take a longer time to be evident can make the whole attempt to prove the effectiveness of ROC's soft power in the Western Balkans challenging, but not impossible. It will only mean that certain effects are yet to be seen, and potentially be the subject of further research.

### 3.1 Serbia

The ROC (and SOC) has for a long time maintained the notion that Serbia and Russia are two ‘brother’ nations, as well as made sure to tend to ties bringing the two together. Serbia seems to be the country with which ties are the most cherished by the ROC and with that, the country that is the main focus of the ROC’s soft power. It is important to point out that, as it was stated in previous chapters, the SOC is the main Orthodox Church in the Western Balkan region, and naturally the soft power resources are focused on this entity. Having this fact in mind, it should come as no surprise that the ROC had the most activities with representatives of the SOC in Serbia, in addition to the government officials and representatives of Serbia in numerous events organized by the ROC.

After careful analysis of events and news from the period December 2005 – August 2014, eighty-nine statements and events were selected for analysis, leaving recurring events out, but still taking them into consideration. Some of these statements and events had several functions and effects, therefore they were assigned two (out of three) types of public diplomacy. There were ten cases of ‘daily communication’ statements that were selected as relevant to the topic, excluding many statements dedicated to Orthodox holidays etc.<sup>142</sup> The selected statements were addressing the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia (row 40), Kosovo, conflicts between Montenegro and Serbia with the involvement of the SOC and lastly, official (standard) statements directed towards the Serbian government.<sup>143</sup> The general message, that can be tracked through these statements is how the ROC supports Serbia and remembers the victims (in both the NATO bombing and the Kosovo conflict), and supports Serbia in its disputes with Montenegro.<sup>144</sup> One of the main contributions to the effort of the ROC in the ‘daily communications’ department was the introduction of the Orthodox TV channel ‘Spas’, that started broadcasting in both Serbia and Montenegro in November 2007.<sup>145</sup> This event can also be interpreted as part of strategic communication, as it is an easily available source of information that was selected and delivered by the ROC to the wider public in Serbia (and Montenegro). This means that “Spas” can be used to support any of the soft power initiatives taken by the Church.

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<sup>142</sup> Appendix 10, rows 9, 17, 22, 29, 34, 39, 55, 57, 62, 81.

<sup>143</sup> Appendix 10, Kosovo – NATO bombing – row 39; Kosovo – rows 22, 34, 55, 57; Montenegro-Serbia conflict – rows 17, 55; official statements – rows 29, 62, 81.

<sup>144</sup> Appendix 10, rows 17, 22, 39, 55, 57.

<sup>145</sup> Appendix 10, row 14.

This leads us to the statements and events that can be categorized as both daily and strategic communications, as they were both addressing the current events and also following a certain theme that aligns with other undertakings of the ROC. There were seven accounts of events that fit this description (including the aforementioned introduction of TV channel “Spas”). The remaining six were dedicated to communicating clear support for the Serbian side in the Kosovo conflict, where the ROC appealed to the injustice that Serbs are experiencing, including the separation from their “historical part of the country”.<sup>146</sup> These statements were coming from the highest institutions of the ROC, including the now Patriarch, then Metropolitan Kirill, World Council of Churches, World Russian People's Council, Patriarch Alexy and others.<sup>147</sup> What makes this both means of daily and strategic communication is the alignment with other activities of the ROC (which makes it strategic) and the fact that they are addressing current events, and communicating their opinions.

There were twenty-eight accounts that were categorized as of a purely strategic nature. One of the most prominent themes was Russian-Serbian relations, in form of forums dedicated to Serbia and official statements dedicated to the strong ties between Serbia and Russia through faith including commemoration services, as well as exchanges of historic materials.<sup>148</sup> The second most notable theme was the promotion of the ROC in Serbia through the following “mediums”: exhibitions in Serbia, presentations of religious topics, programs openly promoting the ROC, religious practices performed in churches in Serbia by representatives of the ROC and similar events, visiting delegations from ROC and SOC between the two countries and lastly a symbolic donation from the ROC to SOC ,a cross was donated to the largest church in Serbia – Saint Sava Temple).<sup>149</sup> Lastly, another three topics were singled out as purely strategic: Kosovo dispute, NATO bombing of Yugoslavia and support of church unity in Serbia and Montenegro.<sup>150</sup>

A separate group of events and statements was identified with both strategic characteristics and the establishment of relationships with individuals and groups. From the

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<sup>146</sup> "Митрополит Кирилл: «Мы Разделяем Горечь И Страдание Сербского Народа, От Которого Была Отторгнута Историческая Часть Страны» / Новости / Патриархия.Ru". 2008. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/365377.html>. Accessed on: 15.07.2022.

<sup>147</sup> Appendix 10, rows 14, 25, 26, 27, 28, 37, 68.

<sup>148</sup> Appendix 10, forums – rows 4, 6; official statements – rows 52, 69, 78, 88.

<sup>149</sup> Appendix 10, exhibitions – row 3; presentations – row 10; promotions of ROC – rows 30, 33; religious practices – rows 21, 46, 58, 72, 73; delegations – rows 36, 43, 64, 76; donations – row 32; "В Дар Собору Святого Саввы В Белграде Будет Передан Резной Крест Из России / Видеоматериалы / Патриархия.Ru". 2008. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/434770.html>. Accessed on: 15.07.2022.

<sup>150</sup> Appendix 10, Kosovo – rows 31, 44; NATO bombing – row 38; church unity – row 3.

chosen events, forty-one could be placed in this category. The majority of the events (twenty-seven) were aimed at specific individuals, however with a clear strategic path.<sup>151</sup> The remaining fourteen were conducted in the presence or dedicated to groups of people.<sup>152</sup> The events with individuals were mostly meetings, and the majority of them were with Serbian government officials (nineteen out of twenty-seven), ranging from meetings with the Serbian president, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Prime Minister to Party chairmen.<sup>153</sup> In contrast, within the same time period, there were only eight meetings with representatives of the SOC.<sup>154</sup> Only one group event involved government officials (Patriarch of SOC and government representatives attended a concert of Russian spiritual music), and the rest were aimed at the SOC and Serbian population.<sup>155</sup> Two interesting themes can be singled out: helping Kosovo Serbs and helping flood victims (2014).<sup>156</sup> The ROC stated their willingness to help victims of the aforementioned events, starting fundraisers and taking other measures to support the victims. These events can be interpreted as strategic because they fit in perfectly with the goals of the ROC, which include strengthening ties between Serbia and Russia (on the church and government level), and on the other hand, making their position clear in the Kosovo dispute. These examples of strategic communication also foster relationships with individuals, in these specific cases – victims, who will almost certainly be supporters of the ROC as it assisted them in their misfortune.

The last category of these selected cases is the ROC's relationship with individuals, which contains examples of the ROC's fostering of relationships with certain individuals. It is different from the previous category, as it can be assumed that in these cases the accent was on the relationship with these people and the strategic agenda was not the main goal. Among the selected events, only two matched the criteria.<sup>157</sup> These were the meetings with

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<sup>151</sup> Appendix 10, rows 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23, 35, 41, 42, 47, 48, 49, 50, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 66, 70, 71, 77, 86.

<sup>152</sup> Appendix 10, rows 1, 2, 18, 45, 51, 53, 56, 59, 80, 82, 83, 84, 87, 89.

<sup>153</sup> Appendix 10, rows 13, 15, 16, 20, 23, 35, 41, 42, 47, 49, 50, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 67, 70, 71, 77.

<sup>154</sup> Appendix 10, rows 8, 19, 49, 55, 68, 75, 80, 87.

<sup>155</sup> "Святейший Патриарх Сербский Ириней И Члены Правительства Сербии Присутствовали На Концерте Русской Духовной Музыки / Новости / Патриархия.Ru". 2011. Патриархия.Ru. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1444050.html>. Accessed on: 16.07.2022.; Appendix 10, rows 1, 2, 18, 45, 53, 56, 59, 80, 82, 83, 84, 87, 89.

<sup>156</sup> "Pet Godina Od Poplava: Bujica Vode, Ali I „Kriminalnog Nemara" - BBC News Na Srpskom". 2019. BBC News Na Srpskom. <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/srbija-48226836>. Accessed on: 19.07.2022; Appendix 10 Kosovo – rows 56, 59; Flood – rows 81, 84, 85, 88.

<sup>157</sup> Appendix 10, rows 7, 40.

Serbian businessman Nenad Popović who was awarded the Order of Holy Prince Daniel of Moscow III degree and the ROC's role in the Vojislav Šešelj's hunger strike.<sup>158</sup>

Lastly, the seniority of officials involved in the aforementioned cases can give some insight into the high level at which the relations between the ROC and Serbia lie. From the ROC side, individuals participating in these meetings were Patriarch Alexy (three instances), Patriarch Kirill (six instances), Metropolitan Kliment – administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations and Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk.<sup>159</sup> On the Serbian side the participating officials were the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador of Serbia to the Russian Federation, President, Minister of Interior, deputy chairman of the Socialist Party of Serbia, Prime Minister, Honorary Chairman of the Democratic Party of Serbia and Patriarch Irinej of Serbia (four instances).<sup>160</sup> These insights confirm that the relationship is maintained on the highest levels in both the government and the SOC.

Concluding this section dedicated to Serbia, it is safe to say that the ROC has employed a selection of soft power tools, with the main topics being the Kosovo conflict and support for Serbia in it, NATO bombing commemoration and lastly maintaining strong cultural ties between Serbia and Russia. Additionally, it was evident that soft power is exercised at the highest level, in both the Serbian government and SOC. This indicates that the ROC has channels of communication with the decision-makers, which allows them to influence certain decisions by simply appealing to the Orthodox faith that represents a shared set of values that appear desirable to the Serbian government, as well as the local Church. Strategic communication, oftentimes paired with other types of public diplomacy, was the most common type of communication used by the ROC, which followed a few specific objectives. It appears that the strategic goals of the ROC were deepening the cultural dialogue between the two countries, and appealing to shared values. Another strategic goal was supporting Serbia in its struggle to resolve the Kosovo dispute, appealing to the importance of Kosovo

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Appendix 10, Patriarch Alexy - rows 15, 23, 35; Patriarch Kirill - rows 41, 61, 63, 71, 77; Metropolitan Kliment – row 13; Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations – rows 42, 47; Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk – rows 50, 60, 65, 66.

<sup>160</sup> Appendix 10, Minister of the Foreign Affairs – rows 13, 20, 42, 47, 60; Ambassador of Serbia to the Russian Federation – rows 15, 16, 35, 41; President – rows 49, 77; Minister of Interior – row 61; Deputy chairman of the Socialist Party of Serbia – row 63; Prime Minister – row 66; Honorary Chairman of the Democratic Party of Serbia – 70; Patriarch Irinej of Serbia – rows 48, 54, 67, 86.

for Serbian Orthodox history. Additionally, the NATO bombing appeared to be one of the reoccurring topics, where the ROC was commemorating victims, most likely with the goal of showing their support for Serbia in its complex relationship with the West. These strategic goals, support Serbia in a way that the country was encouraged to withstand the pressure from the collective West and maintain its position in the case of Kosovo, and in the case of the NATO bombing, recognising the victims of the western alliance. The fact that the ROC was working towards deepening the cultural ties with Serbia, probably didn't sit well with the collective West. It is worth mentioning that in none of these events the ROC did mention the EU.

### 3.2 Montenegro

Montenegro has a long and, nowadays, problematic history involving the Orthodox Church. Even prior to separation from Serbia in 2006, some individuals restored (or according to others – created) MOC Orthodox Church in 1993.<sup>161</sup> Having such a close connection with Serbia and officially falling under SOC's jurisdiction, the fact that the ROC had fewer events and statements dedicated to Montenegro becomes unambiguous. In total, there were thirty-five relevant events and statements that were made within the selected timeline (December 2005 to August 2014).

The first category is “daily communications” which includes five cases. Two statements illustrate the ROC's view on the state of SOC in Montenegro and the emerging conflict between these two entities.<sup>162</sup> As it could have been anticipated, the ROC supported the unity of the SOC and supported this church in the lingering dispute between the SOC and MOC. Three other instances included the interview of Patriarch Alexy, a statement of Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolams where both representatives of the ROC restated their support for the unity of the SOC in Serbia and Montenegro (denying legitimacy to the MOC) and lastly, condolences related to the train accident that occurred in January 2006.<sup>163</sup>

There were only two cases that had attributes of both daily and strategic communications. These involved the aforementioned introduction of TV channel “Spas”,

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<sup>161</sup> Look at Chapter II, 2.3; Maričić, Slobodan. 2021. "Kako Je Izgledao Dan Kada Je Crna Gora Izglasala Nezavisnost - BBC News Na Srpskom". BBC News Na Srpskom. <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/balkan-57192248> Accessed on: 14.07.2022.; Arbutina, Zoran. 2020. "Crnogorska Kvadratura (Crkvenog) Kruga". DW.COM. <https://www.dw.com/bs/crnogorska-kvadratura-crkvenog-kruga/a-52024528>. Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

<sup>162</sup> Appendix 11, rows 7 and 13.

<sup>163</sup> Appendix 11, rows 1, 16, 27.

and Patriarch Alexy's call for unity among the Orthodox Christians in Montenegro.<sup>164</sup> The reason why these events were assigned two categories is because they address the current affairs and at the same time follow a strategic path, of keeping the SOC unified and establishing a channel of communication with the population that can be used for broadcasting their interpretation of different events.

The next category of events is strategic communication, which includes twelve cases in total. These events can be further systematized into several groups: exchange of Orthodox relics, exchange of delegations, participation in celebrations and performances of religious practices, and cultural events.<sup>165</sup> In addition to these groups there was a unique event, where Patriarch Alexy met with Patriarch of Constantinople in Montenegro, presenting the country as the place where Patriarchs of great importance meet.<sup>166</sup> These events were categorized as strategic since they follow certain goals and are in line with themes pursued with other soft power tools.

The establishment of ties with people and groups, together with strategic traits, were shown to belong to a distinct set of events and statements. Sixteen of the selected events potentially fall under this category. Twelve of the events (the majority) had a defined strategic goal and were targeted at certain individuals.<sup>167</sup> The remaining four were carried out or devoted to gatherings of people.<sup>168</sup> Meetings predominated the individual events, and the bulk of them (twelve out of sixteen) were with Montenegrin government leaders. These meetings ranged from those with the Montenegrin President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister, and Ambassadors to Russia. On the other hand, no visit was paid to representatives of the SOC in Montenegro within the selected period. The events targeted at groups involved representatives of the ROC paying visits to churches in Montenegro, sponsoring events for Orthodox camps and participating in conferences. All of these events allow the ROC to build a long-lasting relationship with participants, as they might have benefited from them.<sup>169</sup> As for the level of relations between the ROC and Montenegro, it can be said that it is not as high as in the case of Serbia, however, on the Montenegrin side,

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<sup>164</sup> Appendix 11, rows 14 and 17.

<sup>165</sup> Appendix 11, exchange of Orthodox relics – rows 3, 5, 9, 10; exchange of delegations – row 28, 31, 38, 39; participation in celebrations and performances of religious practices – rows 21, 22, 34, 35; cultural events – row 18.

<sup>166</sup> Appendix 11, row 33.

<sup>167</sup> Appendix 11, rows 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 32.

<sup>168</sup> Appendix 11, rows 23, 18, 29, 35.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.



there were representatives of the highest governmental level. On the ROC side, the following officials participated in meetings: Patriarch Alexy (four times), Patriarch Kirill (two times) and the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations (three times).<sup>170</sup>

Summing up the section about Montenegro, it is clear that the ROC was not as active in Montenegro as it was in Serbia. Perhaps the seeming unity of the Church in these two countries and the (then) recent split could have influenced this lack of activity. One of the main themes and strategic goals was the support for the Church unity; and other activities were tending to maintain the relationship with the country's Orthodox population through participation in various religious practices, making enforcing cultural ties another strategic goal. This, however, didn't prevent the ROC from maintaining the relationships with the government of Montenegro, which could be seen through the number of official meetings between these two entities.

### **3.3 Republika Srpska**

In one of the constituent parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Republika Srpska, SOC is the main Orthodox body, therefore the ROC has the incentive to communicate (and influence) with SOC in Serbia, and the Serbian Government, most likely assuming that this way it could passively spread its influence. In the selected timeframe there were only thirteen events that were worth analyzing.

There was only one example of “daily communications” when the ROC expressed its condolences regarding the death of the President of Republika Srpska.<sup>171</sup> Another two events fall into the “strategic communication” category, one case related to the program “Voices of Orthodox Russia” that can be classified as a cultural event aimed at promoting Russian Orthodox culture and the second event related to the visit of the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations which demonstrates that the ROC has an established channel of communication with Republika Srpska.<sup>172</sup>

The remaining ten selected cases fall into the dual category of strategic communications and relationships with individuals. Six of them are cases of communication with individuals, mainly with government representatives, namely the Chairman of the

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<sup>170</sup> Appendix 11, Patriarch Alexy – rows 2, 6, 11, 12; Patriarch Kirill – rows 20, 32; Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations – rows 24, 25, 26.

<sup>171</sup> Appendix 12, row 2.

<sup>172</sup> Appendix 12, rows 4 and 8.

Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Prime Minister of Republika Srpska, President of the Republika Srpska and President of the National Assembly of the Republika Srpska.<sup>173</sup> One meeting was held with a Bishop of Zvornychko-Tuzla who was awarded with a high church award.<sup>174</sup> Another four events were conferences, forums, and award ceremonies that encouraged the development of the relationship between the ROC and the participants.<sup>175</sup> The individuals involved in the aforementioned events from the ROC side were the Primate of the Russian Church (two instances), Patriarch Kirill (two instances, once in the role of a Metropolitan), Patriarch Alexy (once), Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate (once), The Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations (once).<sup>176</sup>

ROC's activities in Republika Srpska within the selected timeframe were scarce, in comparison to Serbia and Montenegro. The main channel for soft power influence was presumably meetings with the government officials, with the second channel being the promotion of Russian Orthodox Culture, which could appeal to Orthodox Christians that share the same set of values as the ROC, with the strategic goal being creating cultural ties. The absence of activities can be again attributed to the fact that the SOC is the main Orthodox institution within Republika Srpska, therefore by influencing the SOC, the ROC is able to passively influence other countries, without spending more energy, or Republika Srpska did not present a significant interest to the Church.

### **3.4 North Macedonia**

In a sense, North Macedonia is similar to Montenegro since it had a canonically unrecognized Church and at the same time was formally under the jurisdiction of the SOC. As Orthodox Christians in the country were members of the SOC, it can be assumed again that the ROC would count on the influence of the SOC, therefore appealing to passive influence (soft power). There are eighteen cases that seemed relevant for this research.

Two of the instances can be categorized as “daily communications”. One of them was the interview of Patriarch Alexy given to the Macedonian newspaper where he declared that

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<sup>173</sup> Appendix 12, rows 1, 6, 9, 10, 11.

<sup>174</sup> Appendix 12, row 5.

<sup>175</sup> Appendix 12, rows 3, 7, 12, 13.

<sup>176</sup> Appendix 12, Primate of the Russian Church – rows 5, 14; Patriarch Kirill – rows 6 and 12; Patriarch Alexy – row 1; Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate – row 9; The Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations – row 10.

he is committed to resolving the existing dispute between the Macedonian Orthodox Church and SOC, and the other was an article dedicated to the pressure on the members of the SOC in North Macedonia.<sup>177</sup> Another two cases represent the “strategic communication” attempts by the ROC. One of them is the “Voices of Orthodox Russia” program that was held in all four countries that are part of this study. It is aimed at strategically promoting Russian Orthodox culture, appealing to masses from similar cultural backgrounds.<sup>178</sup> The second selected event in this category was ROC’s participation in the Council of Europe on the Religious Dimension of Intercultural Dialogue. This and similar occasions where the ROC participated in such dialogues is strategically giving the ROC opportunity to offer their point of view and influence the way certain decisions are made.<sup>179</sup>

The last group of events is the dual category of strategic communications and relationships with individuals. This group was the most numerous, having fourteen cases out of nineteen. Seven of them represent meetings between the ROC representatives and individuals from the Macedonian Government and Church officials.<sup>180</sup> Remaining eight are examples of ROC’s strategic communication aimed at developing relationships with individuals in a group setting.<sup>181</sup>

Three instances involved the President of Macedonia, however, Patriarch Alexy never held an official meeting with him. The meetings were held with Representatives of the ROC Orthodox Church, the Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations and the Rector of Moscow Theological Schools.<sup>182</sup> Other officials who met with ROC’s officials include Macedonian Ambassador to Russia (two cases, one of them with Patriarch Alexy) and Minister for Foreign Affairs (once).<sup>183</sup>

The final subcategory that will be addressed is strategic communication with groups (therefore also developing relationships with individuals within those groups). The ROC participated in two conferences, where they had the opportunity to communicate with a group of individuals in Macedonia.<sup>184</sup> Another two events from this subcategory are award

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<sup>177</sup> Appendix 13, rows 2 and 5.

<sup>178</sup> Appendix 13, row 8.

<sup>179</sup> Appendix 13, row 13.

<sup>180</sup> Appendix 13, rows 1, 3, 7, 11, 15, 16, 18.

<sup>181</sup> Appendix 13, rows 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 17.

<sup>182</sup> Appendix 13, rows 13, 18 and 20.

<sup>183</sup> Appendix 13, Macedonian Ambassador to Russia – rows 2 and 6; Minister for Foreign Affairs – row 15.

<sup>184</sup> Appendix 13, rows 12 and 14.

ceremonies with the participation of ROC, where Macedonian officials were recognized for their efforts.<sup>185</sup> This is considered a group event since the ROC demonstrated their attitude towards Macedonia, which also could have influenced other participants. ROC also received a delegation of Orthodox Church hierarchs from Macedonia twice, thus being able to develop relationships with these representatives while strategically showing that there is a dialogue between the two institutions.<sup>186</sup> The ROC also organized a concert in Macedonia titled "Voices of Orthodox Russia in Macedonia" and lastly, its representatives visited St Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, again promoting the Orthodox culture and existing cultural ties through groups of people.<sup>187</sup>

Lastly, the level of ROC's engagement with Macedonia can be assessed by reviewing the seniority of its representatives who communicated with Macedonian officials. On the Macedonian side, as it was previously mentioned, the Macedonian Ambassador to Russia, Minister for Foreign Affairs and the country's president were involved in meetings.<sup>188</sup> As for the Orthodox Church in Macedonia, only delegations were involved.<sup>189</sup> The ROC was represented by these individuals: Patriarch Alexy, Secretary of the Moscow Patriarchate for Inter-Orthodox Relations, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Primate of the Russian Church, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, Chairman of the External Church Relations Department and Rector of the Moscow Theological Schools.<sup>190</sup> It is worth mentioning that Patriarch Alexy never met with country's president and held only one meeting with Macedonian Ambassador to Russia.<sup>191</sup> Judging by the presented list, it is evident that in comparison to Serbia for instance, the ROC wasn't as engaged or pursued a more active public policy. As was the case with other countries, it can be assumed that the ROC was mainly focused on Serbia, as it is the home of SOC that is present in all remaining three countries including North Macedonia.

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<sup>185</sup> Appendix 13, rows 5 and 9.

<sup>186</sup> Appendix 13, rows 7 and 10.

<sup>187</sup> Appendix 13, rows 3 and 17.

<sup>188</sup> Appendix 13, rows 2, 6, 15, 16, 18.

<sup>189</sup> Appendix 13, rows 7 and 10.

<sup>190</sup> Appendix 13, Patriarch Alexy – row 3; Secretary of the Moscow Patriarchate for Inter-Orthodox Relations – row 6; Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad – row 7; Primate of the Russian Church – rows 9; Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations rows – 10, 15; Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations – row 11; Rector of the Moscow Theological Schools – rows 17, 18;

<sup>191</sup> Appendix 13, row 2.

Concluding the section on North Macedonia, two topics can be singled out from the rest – cultural interactions and the Serbian-Macedonian conflict between the two national churches. Concluding the section on North Macedonia, two topics can be singled out from the rest as strategic goals – strengthening cultural interactions and mediating in Serbian-Macedonian conflict between the two national churches. The cultural “string” was present in other countries, therefore in North Macedonia the ROC also exercised this type of soft power. In terms of ROC’s role in the Serbian-Macedonian conflict, the institution appealed to negotiations and resolved the conflict on fair terms, as opposed to simply siding with SOC. As of the level at which the ROC communicated with representatives of North Macedonia, it is clear that the ROC didn’t engage with this country at the highest possible level. This could be explained by several things: firstly, this behavior could demonstrate the passive ROC’s protest of the Macedonian government that supported their own national church, instead of SOC; secondly, as mentioned previously, the ROC might count on the influence of SOC that could passively “transfer” the influence and lastly it could simply show that North Macedonia is not a country of interest for ROC.

After analyzing the public diplomacy of the ROC in Serbia, Montenegro, Republika Srpska and North Macedonia, it is clear that the ROC dedicated the most resources to Serbia and SOC there. It can be explained by a few reasons – SOC is the Church present in all four Orthodox-majority countries; Serbia as the largest out of four – therefore with the highest number of Orthodox Christians – is the country of interest for ROC. The main topics of Serbia-SOC-ROC interactions were the Kosovo conflict, NATO bombing commemoration and strong cultural ties between Serbia and Russia. Strategic goals of the ROC in Serbia were deepening the cultural dialogue between the two countries, and appealing to shared values. Montenegro could be put in second place in terms of ROC’s engagement. The main topics of ROC’s public diplomacy efforts were the support for the Church unity and the relationship with the country’s Orthodox population. North Macedonia could be put third on the list of ROC’s priorities in the Western Balkan region, according to the level of ROC’s engagement in the country. As with other two countries, ROC was working on promoting the shared Orthodox cultural values and was vocal about the conflict between the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the SOC. Lastly, Republika Srpska received the least attention from the ROC compared to other countries. The main topic of their public diplomacy was the cultural promotion of shared Orthodox cultural values and almost no other notable topic. As it was mentioned multiple times, the reason for this apparent

“favoritism” could be the status of the SOC in the region and its historical dominance over all other Orthodox institutions in the Western Balkans. SOC is present in all four countries and therefore Serbia and SOC are able to convey ideas and values of the ROC without actively practicing public diplomacy. This, however, didn’t prevent ROC from performing public diplomacy activities in Montenegro, North Macedonia and Republika Srpska, although at a much smaller scale. The most common type of public diplomacy of the ROC appeared to be the dual category of strategic communication and development of relationships with individuals. The dual nature allowed the ROC to strategically communicate with the public through showing their engagement with individuals on different levels, while simultaneously developing relationships with decision makers, that among other things also share Orthodox values with the Church and therefore could be influenced at this exact level. Finally, the levels at which the ROC was operating were differing. To simplify the comparison, we can look at the number of visits or meetings held with the Patriarch of ROC and with whom did they meet. Following the existing trend, there were nine meetings held between the two Patriarchs (Alexy and Kirill) with Patriarch of SOC, Serbian Ambassador to Russia, Minister of Interior, Chairman of the Socialist party, Chairman of Democratic party and President. Patriarch paid six visits, meeting with Montenegrin Ambassador to Russia, Minister of Foreign Affairs, President and Prime Minister. There were no meetings held between the ROCs Patriarch with the President of North Macedonia, having held only one with Macedonian Ambassador to Russia. In case of Republika Srpska the Patriarchs held two meetings with the entity’s Prime Minister and President. These values could be used to assess the level at which the ROC is engaged with one country and having this in mind we can finally state that Serbia and SOC was definitely the main focus of the ROCs public diplomacy, with Montenegro coming second, Republika Srpska third and finally North Macedonia fourth.

## **IV The effect of Russian Orthodox Church's soft power on political outcomes in the Balkans**

As with any projection of power, soft power's role is to influence parties of interest, so that the body emanating soft power reaches its goals without coercion. The ROC's soft power and the mode in which it was used in Serbia, Montenegro, Republika Srpska and North Macedonia was the subject of the previous chapter, and in order to "measure" the effect of the ROC's efforts, it is essential to investigate whether the countries in question adopted any laws, or made any decision that is in line with soft power efforts of the ROC. Soft power is rather difficult to measure due to its inconspicuous nature, so one must appeal to qualitative analysis of the official documents, decisions and statements to assess the effectiveness of ROC's public diplomacy. Soft power effects can last for a significant amount of time or take a long time to take effect, which allows us to extend the original timeframe (December 2005 – August 2014) for tracking ROC's soft power effects beyond 2014. Prior to addressing the laws and decisions related to the strategic goals of the ROC, it is important to mention that their adoption can't be solely attributed to the ROC's public diplomacy, but rather consider it as one of the many cumulative factors that contributed to the adoption of these laws and decisions.

### **4.1 Serbia**

Serbia, together with its national church – SOC were the main focus of the ROC, as established previously. After analyzing ROC's public diplomacy efforts in Serbia, its strategic soft power goals became evident – deepening cultural ties between Russia and Serbia and supporting Serbia in its complex relationship with the West including the Kosovo dispute and NATO bombing consequences.

To establish the link between these goals and ROC's soft power one must try and identify political decisions that can be associated with the ROC's efforts in Serbia. To do so it can prove useful to review relevant decisions, laws and documents adopted by the Serbian Parliament. Nine representable official documents were selected for the purpose of reviewing the impact of the ROC's soft power. The first selection of decisions and documents has to do with Kosovo. It is clear that Serbia chose to maintain its territorial integrity due to many reasons, among others including culture. As it was shown in the previous chapter, the ROC undoubtedly took Serbia's side in this conflict which is visible through their statements and actions. Having in mind that the ROC most likely wasn't the

sole reason for the adoption or consideration of the following official decisions, the undeniable support could have encouraged the government to pursue its chosen course, especially since the ROC appealed to the cultural significance of Kosovo for Orthodox Christians in the region. In 2007 Serbia's Parliament (National Assembly) adopted a resolution on resolving the Kosovo dispute.<sup>192</sup> Prior to this the ROC demonstrated its support for Serbia by helping Kosovo Serbs materially and dedicating events to raising awareness about the issue.<sup>193</sup> Another decision concerning Kosovo was adopted in 2010, under the agenda of territorial integrity.<sup>194</sup> Again, leading up to this moment, the ROC has demonstrated its full support for Serbia and Kosovo Serbs, including the statement from the Patriarch himself.<sup>195</sup> In 2017, the Serbian Parliament proposed establishing a commission that will investigate anti-Serb violence in Kosovo and issued another proposal in 2018 to investigate the circumstances that resulted in Kosovo's independence.<sup>196</sup> The ROC again made an effort to demonstrate its support for Serbia by starting fundraisers for Kosovo Serbs and visiting the Visoki Dečani monastery, thus physically demonstrating its support.<sup>197</sup> Lastly, Serbia adopted the Law on Cultural Heritage in 2020 which clearly accentuates Serbian cultural heritage on the territory of Kosovo.<sup>198</sup>

The ROC's efforts to commemorate the victims of the NATO bombing potentially lead to the decision adopted by the Parliament in 2018, which assumed forming a commission to investigate the consequences of the bombing.<sup>199</sup> The ROC made official statements and performed memorial services for the victims, prior to the adoption of this decision.<sup>200</sup> On the other hand, Serbia joined NATO's partnership for peace in 2006, resulting in the signing of the Individual Partnership Action Plan in 2015, deepening the cooperation between the two.<sup>201</sup>

The three remaining laws (and a statement) are showcasing the potential impact of ROC's public diplomacy in the case of cultural ties between Russia and Serbia. In 2019 the

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<sup>192</sup> Appendix 14, row 1.

<sup>193</sup> Appendix 10, rows 4, 8, 12.

<sup>194</sup> Appendix 14, row 2.

<sup>195</sup> Appendix 10, rows 25, 26, 28, 31, 37.

<sup>196</sup> Appendix 14, rows 3, 4.

<sup>197</sup> Appendix 10 rows 44, 56, 59.

<sup>198</sup> Appendix 14, row 9.

<sup>199</sup> Appendix 14, row 5.

<sup>200</sup> Appendix 10, row 38, 39.

<sup>201</sup> "Relations With Serbia". 2022. NATO. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50100.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50100.htm). Accessed on: 21.07.2022.



Parliament adopted a law that was aimed at developing Russian-Serbian cultural and informational centres and during the same year another law was adopted on the subject of delivery of Orthodox relics and other exchanges.<sup>202</sup> Additionally, during the same year, the Serbian Government declared that the relations between Russia and Serbia were at an all-time high.<sup>203</sup> The majority of the activities of the ROC in Serbia were aimed precisely at bringing the two countries together on the cultural level, which was demonstrated in the previous chapter. The ROC had several “channels” of cultural influence that potentially stimulated both governments to pursue deepening their relations, including personal visits, conferences, forums, concerts etc.<sup>204</sup>

The impact of the ROC’s soft power appears to be difficult to measure due to its nature, however, one can view its efforts as an additional stimulus for the Serbian government to pursue certain political decisions. As demonstrated, Serbia adopted many laws regarding Kosovo, including the Serbian cultural heritage that is located there. The ROC had clearly stated its allegiance and adopted several measures, made statements and organized events that most likely additionally encouraged the Serbian Parliament. The key here is that the ROC had appealed to the cultural aspect of the issue, reminding Serbia of the importance of Kosovo, as the centre of their Orthodoxy, which is a clear use of soft power, appealing to shared values, which in turn makes the ROC and with-it Russia attractive in the eyes of Serbs and Kosovo Serbs in particular. The ROC’s attempts to remind Serbia of the NATO bombing of 1999 could be both labelled as successful and unsuccessful. Serbian Parliament did adopt a decision to start investigating the consequences of the bombing, but on the other hand, Serbia is openly cooperating with NATO (however still didn’t join the alliance). However, one thing remains unclear and that is whether the ROC was going after breaking ties between Serbia and NATO or was merely “being Christian”. Lastly, the attempt to deepen the cultural ties between the two Orthodox nations – Serbia and Russia, could be deemed as successful. The laws that were adopted, along with the clear statement from the Serbian government on the astonishing level of the countries’ relationship, demonstrate that the ROC managed to contribute to the adoption of these laws, that formalized the close relationship between the two countries, where Orthodox Church plays a significant role in everyday life. As the share of soft power impact on any decision is almost impossible to detect, it can only be said that

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<sup>202</sup> Appendix 14, rows 6, 7.

<sup>203</sup> Appendix 14, row 8.

<sup>204</sup> Look at chapter III.

the ROC's influence is present and that, as demonstrated, it managed to accomplish the set goals, even if paired with other factors.

## 4.2 Montenegro

The ROC in Montenegro played the role of the proponent of the united SOC in both countries and worked on strengthening cultural ties on many levels including the Government. These activities and roles represent the main strategic goals of the ROC in Montenegro – supporting the unity of the SOC in Montenegro and Serbia and secondly, strengthening cultural ties with Montenegro, therefore appealing to shared cultural values which, in turn, generates attraction.

After reviewing the adopted laws and decisions it became evident that the ROC's soft power in Montenegro didn't entirely achieve its objectives, which was the case in Serbia. In terms of strengthening cultural ties, there were no laws adopted that would favour this process. The unity of the SOC in Montenegro and Serbia, which was one of the main strategic goals of the ROC in Montenegro, was maintained in Montenegro, however, the status of the SOC in the country is still a controversial topic. Montenegro has two Orthodox Churches existing on its territory, one of which is not canonically recognized and the other one is the SOC.<sup>205</sup> In 2019 Montenegrin government adopted a law, which refers to the appropriation by the state of all sacred objects unless the religious community can prove that these objects were in its possession before December 1, 1918 (when Montenegro became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes).<sup>206</sup> This law appeared to target the SOC, causing mass protests organized by those who adhere to the SOC.<sup>207</sup> The ROC commented on the issue, implying that the law seeks to alienate people from their historic memory and their ancestors' faith.<sup>208</sup> In this case, the ROC's soft power succeeded in the sense that the population in Montenegro chose to protect the SOC from the government, which indirectly supported the MOC. The separation of the SOC was prevented; however, the Montenegrin

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<sup>205</sup> Look at Chapter II.

<sup>206</sup> Ministarstvo Pravde Crne Gore 2020. "Ukaz O Proglašenju Zakona O Slobodi Vjeroispovijesti Ili Uvjerjenja I Pravnom Položaju Vjerskih Zajednica" <https://www.gov.me/dokumenta/478d573b-742e-45ec-b351-9a3b21fed2c3>. Articles 62-64. Accessed on: 21.07.2022.

<sup>207</sup> Heckert, Fynn-Morten. 2020. "Protests Against The Law On Religious Freedom In Montenegro. A Challenge To The "Đukanović-System"?". Contemporary Southeastern Europe, no. 1: 11-24. <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=870588>. Accessed on: 22.07.2022.; "U Fotografijama: Litije U Crnoj Gori - BBC News Na Srpskom". 2020. BBC News Na Srpskom. <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/balkan-51575946>. Accessed on: 22.07.2022.

<sup>208</sup> "РПЦ Назвала Циничным Закон О Свободе Вероисповедания В Черногории". 2019. Kommersant.Ru. <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4213897>. Accessed on: 22.07.2022.

Government was clearly not dealing with this issue in favour of SOC and consequently ROC, proving that the public diplomacy efforts were more effective on the level of the general population.

The ROC's soft power appeared to be less effective in Montenegro compared to Serbia. The country's government didn't adopt any ROC nor Russia "friendly" laws and remains in a state of open conflict with the SOC. As was mentioned previously, ROC's soft power can't be the sole reason for undertaking certain actions, but its effects can "navigate" decision-makers and governments to adopt decisions that create favourable conditions for the ROC and Russia. Montenegro has chosen to follow the EU path, and with that, it had to distance itself from Russia and everything that is associated with it, including the Orthodox Church, both Russian and Serbian.

### 4.3 Republika Srpska

The ROC's public diplomacy in Republika Srpska was limited in its actions, therefore it can be expected that there were no significant developments or any major laws adopted in ROC's interest. The only noticeable strategic goal is strengthening cultural ties between Republika Srpska and the ROC and consequently Russia as a whole.

There is one significant event that is in line with the strategic goals of the ROC. In 2012 Milorad Dodik (Serb member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina) participated in the opening ceremony of the Russian centre, whose functions include spreading Russian culture and language. The centre was envisioned by Putin within the "Russian world" project, which stimulates the creation of similar centres all over the world, encouraging people to get acquainted with the Russian language and culture.<sup>209</sup>

Even though the activities of the ROC were scarce in Republika Srpska, the establishment of the Russian centre can be presented as a success for the ROC's agenda, even though the main initiator of this was the Russian Government. The ROC organized a number of events in Republika Srpska that was aimed at the Orthodox population, which constitutes the majority, and consequently made them more accepting of this Russian initiative. The reason why the ROC was not as active in Republika Srpska could be that it

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<sup>209</sup>Macanović, A. "Banjaluka: Otvoren Ruski Centar". 2012. NOVOSTI. <https://www.novosti.rs/vesti/planeta.300.html%3A395872-Banjaluka-Otvoren-ruski-centar>. Accessed on: 22.07.2022.; Пономарјева, Јелена. 2014. "Русија И Република Српска: Везе Народа И Времена". Политица 4 (8): 99 - 101. <https://scindeks-clanci.ceon.rs/data/pdf/2232-9641/2014/2232-96411408099P.pdf>. Accessed on: 22.07.2022.

counts on the Serbian and SOC influence that can passively transmit the pro-ROC sentiment. On the other hand, Republika Srpska is part of the larger entity – The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and therefore, the ROC can only effectively influence part of the country. Perhaps the ROC increased its levels of activity in the years following 2014 and has a new agenda for Republika Srpska in upcoming decades.

#### **4.4 North Macedonia**

Similarly to Republika Srpska, North Macedonia also appeared not to be the main interest of the ROC in the Western Balkans. In its public diplomacy efforts, the ROC appeared to pursue two strategic goals – deepening cultural connections and mediating the conflict between the two national churches in Serbia and Macedonia.

The North Macedonian Parliament hasn't adopted a single law that would support the ROC's efforts aimed at developing cultural connections between Orthodox Macedonians and the ROC. Similarly, the Parliament didn't adopt any laws or decisions regarding the dispute between the SOC and the Macedonian Orthodox Church, however, the North Macedonian President called on ROC's Patriarch Alexy to continue mediating between the two Churches in order to reach a consensus.<sup>210</sup> This development has proven that the ROC has certain authority in the Orthodox "realm" in North Macedonia, therefore one of its strategic goals, within this timeframe can be deemed as fulfilled. Consequently, in 2022 SOC granted autonomy to Macedonian Orthodox Church – Archdiocese of Ohrid, thus ending the decades-long dispute.<sup>211</sup>

The ROC's public diplomacy efforts have resulted in one achievement – the ROC was recognized as a valuable participant in the dialogue between the SOC and the Macedonian Orthodox Church. On the other hand, North Macedonian Government didn't make any political decisions that would stimulate the engagement between the Russian and North Macedonian cultures. One of the possible reasons for non-receptiveness could be the fact that North Macedonia has the smallest Orthodox community compared to the other three entities.

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<sup>210</sup> "Президент Македоније Призвао Светијшег Патријарха Алексеја II К Посредничеству В Разрешенију Црквеног Конфликта Међу Македонијом И Србијом / Новости / Патријархија.Ру". 2005. Патријархија.Ру. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/38584.html>. Accessed on: 22.07.2022.

<sup>211</sup> "SPC Dala Saglasnost Za Samostalnost Makedonske Pravoslavne Crkve - BBC News Na Srpskom". 2022. BBC News Na Srpskom. <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/balkan-61509904>. Accessed on: 22.07.2022.

Summing up the chapter on the results of ROC's soft power efforts, Serbia appears to be the most successful example of ROC's public diplomacy effectiveness. This should not come as a surprise since the ROC had the most active public diplomacy in this country. The Serbian Government seemed to be receptive to stimuli coming from the ROC, even though many other factors could have influenced their decisions. ROC's support of Serbia in the Kosovo dispute has most likely encouraged the Serbian Government to adopt laws protecting their interests. Similarly, the Serbian Government established cultural exchange with Russia on the state level, which was undoubtedly influenced by the strong efforts of the ROC to appeal to the common and admirable traits of Russian Orthodox culture. ROC's "anti-NATO" campaign has also delivered some results – laws aimed at investigating the bombing campaign, however, Serbia is also choosing to cooperate with the alliance, therefore making this achievement doubtful. In the case of Montenegro, the ROC failed to establish cultural ties at the state level, however, it managed to play an essential role in the dispute between the Government and SOC. With one of the ROC's goals is maintaining the unity of the SOC, one can deem this effort successful. As Republika Srpska didn't receive as much attention from the ROC as for example Serbia, ROC's humble achievements still demonstrate the receptiveness of the entity to ROC's influence. This achievement was the establishment of the Russian centre in Banja Luka, whose mission is to spread Russian culture and language. Finally, in the case of North Macedonia, ROC failed to establish the cultural connection at the state level, but it managed to position itself as the main mediator in the conflict between Serbian and Macedonian Churches, thus securing the position of Orthodox authority in North Macedonia and achieving one of its goals. Extrapolating ROC's soft power to the whole region, with some countries being more responsive than others, facts suggest that within the selected timeframe, ROC was moderately influential. Certainly, one must take into account the passive influence coming from the SOC, which is the main "ally" of the ROC in the Western Balkans. Another important note is that soft power can deliver more results with time and that the nature of soft power makes it difficult to quantify its effect clearly.

## Conclusion

The beauty of culture and its soft power is that it leaves traces long after its initial contact with different nations. Who could have imagined that centuries after the first contact between Balkan Orthodox Christians and the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), the latter could have maintained its presence in the Western Balkans, even when religion itself went through numerous transformations and a steep decline in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the rebirth of the nation-states after the collapse of both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, Orthodox Christianity re-emerged as the real connecting force, after being subdued by atheistic regimes. In the relatively new reality, the Western Balkan countries found themselves yet again at a crossroads, this time between the EU and Russia. Regardless of what is Russia's agenda, the Russian Orthodox Church maintained its position in the Western Balkan region, by employing strategies that can also be called simply soft power.

Western Balkans were once helped by the Orthodox Christian Empire that Russia once was, in the battle against the common adversary – the Ottomans. This created strong positive feedback coming from the Western Balkans, associating Russia and ROC as something friendly and culturally similar. This effect could be traced to the polls, where Russia is still viewed as the protector of Orthodox Christians. Even though religious feelings are subsiding in the West, Western Balkan countries remain one of the most religious, with individuals stating their commitment to their religion. Astonishing 70% (average for the region) of the population considered themselves religious, which makes them potentially susceptible to influence coming from the Church, be it local or Russian. Census data has shown that Orthodox majority countries in the region are Serbia, Montenegro, Republika Srpska and North Macedonia (the smallest Orthodox population) with an average of 70% of the population being Orthodox. This indicator excluded Albania and Kosovo from the study, as their Orthodox populations are significantly smaller. The addressed studies showed that Orthodoxy is an integral part of national identity in Serbia, however, in contrast not many attend church on a weekly basis. In Serbia and Bosnia, Moscow Patriarch fared better in polls compared to the Patriarch of Constantinople, however, the Serbian Patriarch had greater support in Serbia. Both aforementioned countries view Russia as the protector of the Orthodox Christians abroad, demonstrating the legacy of the previous centuries. As for Montenegro and North Macedonia, even though similar data was not available, it can be assumed due to the essentially collective historical path, both countries are not far from the

views present in Serbia and Republika Srpska. This concludes the image of the “religious map” of the Western Balkans.

The status of Orthodox Churches in the Western Balkans is at the very least intricate. The structure of the Church as an institution is the same in all Churches, having their administrative divisions and inner hierarchy. Needless to say, Orthodox Churches play a pivotal role in the process of strengthening national identity, especially in Montenegro and North Macedonia, with the historically oldest and most widespread Church being the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC). The conflict between the new Churches and “traditional” SOC is the main theme in the region, with the ROC backing up the SOC. The SOC remains the only widespread Orthodox Church in Republika Srpska, and its authority remains unchallenged. These events additionally strengthen the notion that Orthodoxy in the Balkans is tightly linked to the national identity, and to the conflicts that still exist in the Western Balkans on a much smaller scale. Either way, the SOC appears to have the highest outreach and has been in the region for the longest, which makes it an attractive ally for the ROC, due to its legitimacy. Presumably, the ROC could have used the SOC as its proxy and thus achieve its objectives in the region. The conflictual nature of the relations between the Montenegrin and North Macedonian Orthodox Churches on the one side and SOC on the other, creates space for the ROC to be involved and thus project its influence one way or the other.

How this influence was projected was demonstrated through public diplomacy efforts made by the ROC. Serbia seemed to be the prime receiver of the ROC’s public diplomacy efforts, which can be attributed to its presence in all four Orthodox majority countries in the region and having the largest Orthodox population in the Western Balkans. The main strategic topics that were present in the public diplomacy in Serbia were the Kosovo conflict, the NATO bombing commemoration and strong cultural ties between Serbia and Russia. Montenegro appeared to be second on the ROC’s list judging by the levels of engagement. ROC’s narratives that were present in Montenegro included support for the Church unity and the relationship of the ROC with the country’s Orthodox population. North Macedonia came third in terms of the intensity of ROC’s public diplomacy and was strategically exposed to shared Orthodox cultural values. Another significant strategic vector of communication and subsequent influence was the conflict between the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the SOC. Republika Srpska appeared to be the last on the list in terms of engagement with the ROC. The only notable topic of strategic communication was again the cultural dialogue between the Orthodox communities. This should not be surprising as the ROC operates

mainly in the cultural realm, therefore the main emphasis was put precisely on cultural dialogue and promotion. As previously mentioned, Serbia appeared to be the main focus of the ROC, and with-it SOC. As SOC is present in all four countries, it could have been used as a proxy to convey ideas and values to other countries without actively engaging in public diplomacy. Nonetheless, the ROC was practising public diplomacy in Montenegro, North Macedonia and Republika Srpska, although at a much smaller scale. The ROC was operating mostly in the dual category of strategic communication and the development of relationships with individuals. This allowed the ROC to pursue two goals simultaneously - communicate with the public by showing their engagement with individuals on different levels and develop relationships with decision-makers through shared Orthodox values. The ROC also chose to engage with the countries' officials on different levels, thus demonstrating the importance of maintaining a relationship with one country or the other. Both Patriarchs of the ROC held nine meetings with the high representatives of the Serbian government and SOC, in Montenegro six (excluding the representatives of the canonically unrecognized MOC). As of North Macedonia, Patriarch held only one meeting with the Ambassador in Moscow, and in the case of Republika Srpska, Patriarch held two meetings with the entity's Prime Minister and President. This comparison offers a clear hierarchy of priorities for the ROC, where Serbia remains the main focus of ROC's public diplomacy. The reason why the ROC was barely engaged with North Macedonia might be attributed to the government's clear support for its "breakaway" Church, which was not accepted by the SOC and therefore by ROC (as it clearly supports the SOC). Montenegro, probably due to its fading ties with Russia and ROC had received less attention and visits and lastly, Republika Srpska is most likely treated as a cultural extension of Serbia, therefore activities in Serbia are reflected within this entity as well.

As assumed by any power theory, certain actions must result in a reaction, and the same outcome is expected with soft power efforts. Corresponding to the active engagement of the ROC with the Serbian public and officials, the Church has affected or at least stimulated certain decisions that are in line with the strategic goals of the ROC in Serbia by providing visible support. The ROC's support of Serbia in the Kosovo matter, most likely resonated with certain laws and decisions that were adopted by the Serbian government. The same stimuli most likely encouraged Serbia to essentially "institutionalize" cultural exchange with Russia, by appealing to the common traits of Orthodox culture. The ROC's efforts to remind the Serbian community of the NATO bombing were somewhat successful,



as the Government adopted certain laws calling for investigating the damages, but on the other hand, Serbia has begun its cooperation with NATO. The ROC was less successful in influencing decisions made by the Montenegrin Government. There were no laws establishing the cultural relationship between Russia and Montenegro, as was the case in Serbia. On the other hand, the ROC played an essential role in the dispute between the Government and the SOC. One of the strategic goals of the ROC was to maintain the unity of the SOC in Montenegro and Serbia, which can be deemed as achieved, even though much larger forces were involved in the process. In Republika Srpska, in line with the efforts of the ROC which were minor if compared to Serbia, the humble results – the establishment of the Russian centre in Banja Luka - demonstrate the receptiveness of the entity to ROC's influence. Establishing cultural ties on the state level failed in North Macedonia, however, the ROC established itself as the main mediator in the conflict between Serbian and Macedonian Churches, which can have further political implications. Even though identifying soft power is a difficult task, with the application of the theory, certain conclusions can be reached. Within the selected timeframe, it is safe to say that the influence of the ROC can be traced, which was more effective in certain countries (Serbia). One factor that can potentially widen the ROC's influence is the SOC's relationship with the ROC, which could have contributed to mobilizing and influencing members of the SOC outside Serbia.

Revisiting the hypothesis, one can agree that the achieved conclusions correspond with the assumption that the ROC is an influential factor in the Western Balkans. The question remains whether this influence is high, or rather mild, but as it was seen throughout the research, Serbia could fall within the "high influence" category, so in this case, if compiling all countries, the influence is rather mild. Finally, answering the main research question, the ROC is a factor that influences the Western Balkan countries, but the intensity at which it does that is probably not critical, as it was seen through policies that could have been affected by the ROC's soft power. Another note is that soft power is rather difficult to identify, and certain achievements of its application can be seen in the next several decades. Certainly, this topic has the potential to be further investigated, in a perhaps different time frame. Some other related topics that deserve attention from academia are the relationship between SOC and ROC, as well as a thorough analysis of ROC's and Russian softer power alignment and relationship.

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## List of Appendices

Appendix no.1: Types of power (table)

	Hard	Soft
Spectrum of Behaviors	Command ← coercion    inducement →	agenda    setting attraction → Co-opt
Most Likely Resources	payments    force sanctions    bribes	institutions    values culture policies

Source: Nye, Joseph S. 2004. *Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics*. 1st ed. New York: PublicAffairs. p. 8.

Appendix no. 2: Three types of power (table)

	Behaviors	Primary Currencies	Government Policies
Military Power	coercion deterrence protection	threats force	coercive diplomacy war alliance
Economic Power	inducement coercion	payments sanctions	aid bribes sanctions
Soft Power	attraction agenda setting	values culture policies institutions	public diplomacy bilateral and multilateral diplomacy

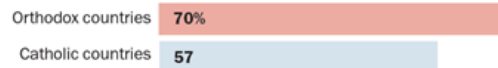
Source: Nye, Joseph S. 2004. *Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics*. 1st ed. New York: PublicAffairs. p. 31.

### Appendix no. 3: Association between religion and national identity (graph)

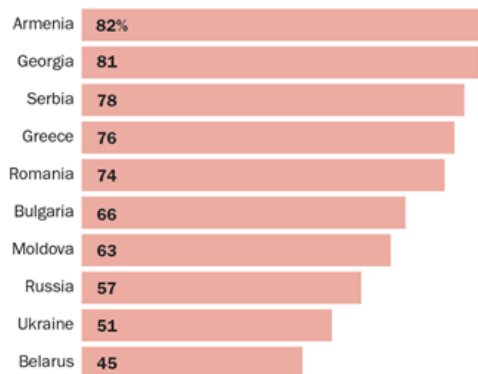
#### Strong association, especially in Orthodox-majority countries, between religion and national identity

*% who say being Orthodox/Catholic is very or somewhat important to truly share their national identity*

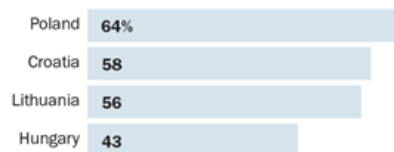
##### Median results of surveyed countries



Among those in **Orthodox-majority countries**, % who say being **Orthodox** is very or somewhat important to truly be a national of their country



Among those in **Catholic-majority countries**, % who say being **Catholic** is very or somewhat important to truly be a national of their country



Source: Survey conducted June 2015-July 2016 in 18 countries.  
See Methodology for details.  
"Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe"

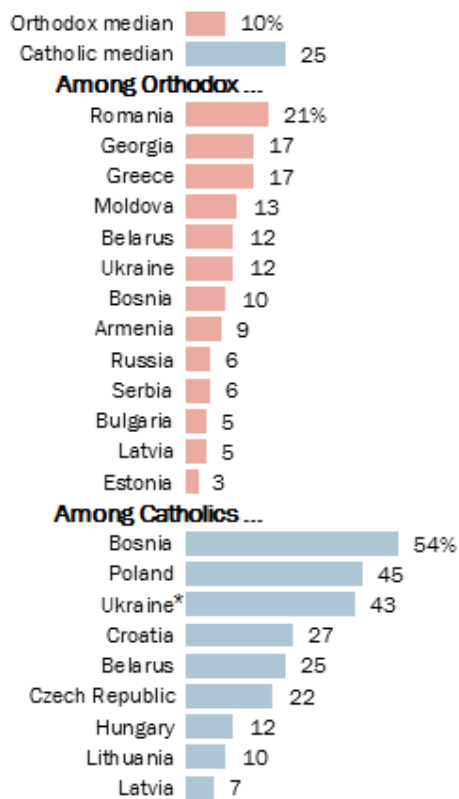
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: "Religious Belief And National Belonging In Central And Eastern Europe". 2017. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

Appendix no. 4: Shares of Orthodox Christians across Central and Eastern Europe that attend church weekly (graph)

### Relatively low shares of Orthodox across Central and Eastern Europe attend church weekly

*% who say they attend church weekly*



\* In Ukraine, most Catholics identify as Byzantine Rite Eastern Catholics, whereas in most other countries, Catholics are Roman Catholics.

Source: Survey conducted June 2015-July 2016 in 18 countries. See Methodology for details.

"Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

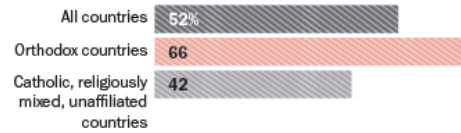
Source: "Religious Belief And National Belonging In Central And Eastern Europe". 2017. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

Appendix no. 5: Majorities in Orthodox countries that look to Russia to counter the West (graph)

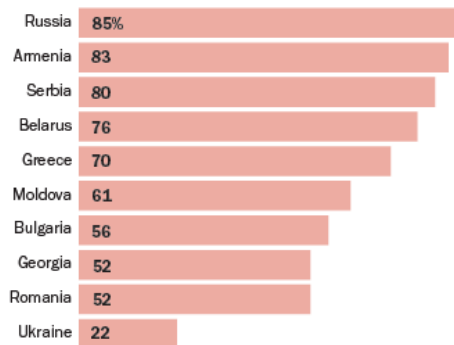
**Majorities in Orthodox countries look to Russia to counter the West**

*% who completely or mostly agree with the statement, "A strong Russia is necessary to balance the influence of the West"*

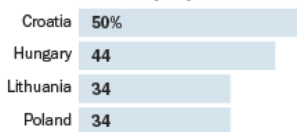
**Median results of surveyed countries**



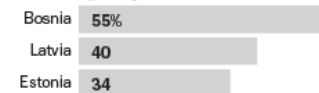
**Among those in Orthodox-majority countries**



**Among those in Catholic-majority countries**



**Among those in religiously mixed countries**



**Among those in majority religiously unaffiliated countries**



Source: Survey conducted June 2015-July 2016 in 18 countries. See Methodology for details.

"Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe"

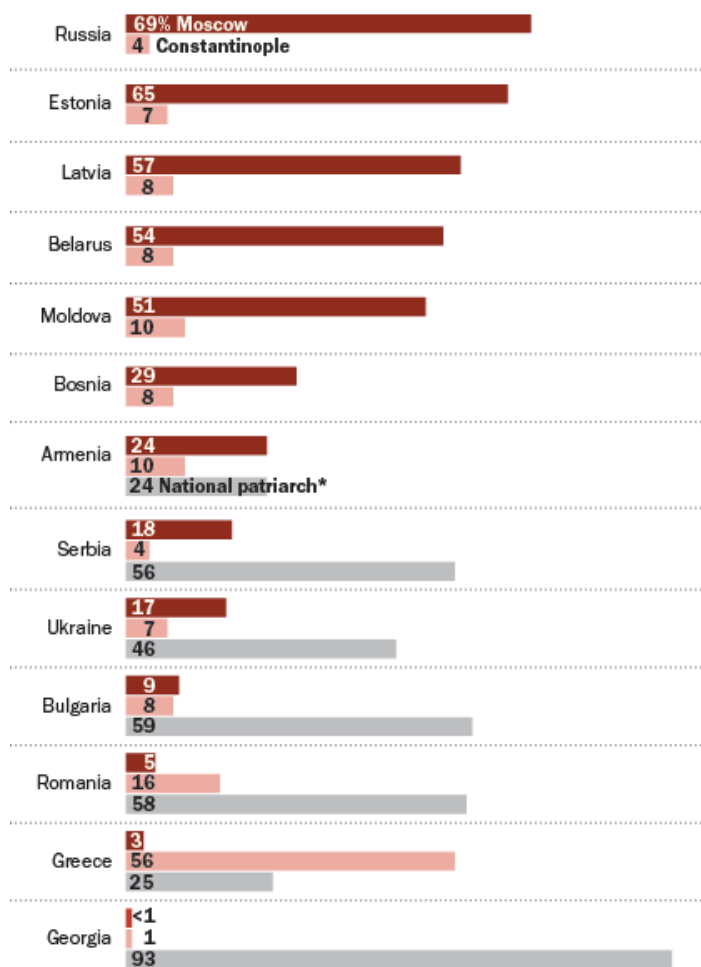
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: "Religious Belief And National Belonging In Central And Eastern Europe". 2017. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

Appendix no. 6: Support for patriarch of Moscow and patriarch of Constantinople (graph)

**Stronger support for patriarch of Moscow than patriarch of Constantinople**

*% of Orthodox Christians who say they recognize the patriarch of \_\_\_ as the highest authority of the Orthodox Church*



\*In Armenia, Georgia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece many respondents volunteered their national patriarch as the highest authority of the Orthodox Church. In Ukraine, respondents were also offered "patriarch of Kiev" as a response, and many respondents also volunteered "the metropolitan of Kiev and all Ukraine." These responses are combined.

Source: Survey conducted June 2015-July 2016 in 18 countries.

See Methodology for details.

"Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: "Religious Belief And National Belonging In Central And Eastern Europe". 2017. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

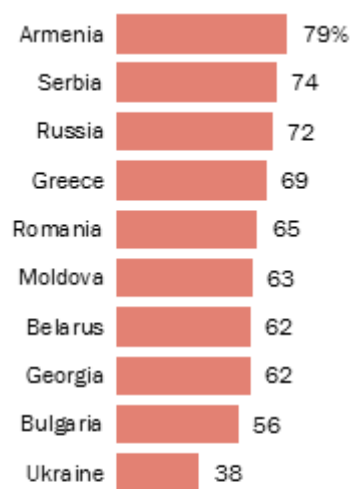


Appendix no. 7: Support in Orthodox-majority countries for Russia protecting Orthodox Christians (graph)

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### **In Orthodox-majority countries, widespread support for Russia protecting Orthodox Christians**

*% who say, "Russia has an obligation to protect Orthodox Christians outside its borders"*



Source: Survey conducted June 2015-July 2016 in 18 countries. See Methodology for details.

"Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe"

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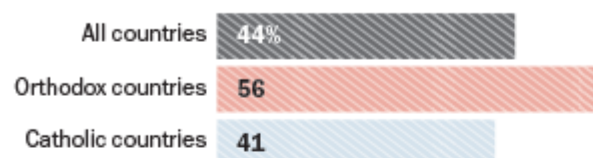
Source: "Religious Belief And National Belonging In Central And Eastern Europe". 2017. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

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## In Orthodox-majority countries, higher support for public funding of the church

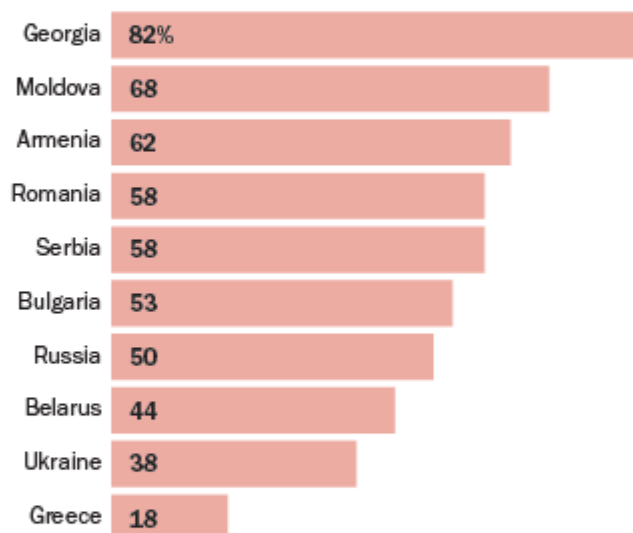
*% who say the national church should receive financial support from the government*

### Median results of surveyed countries



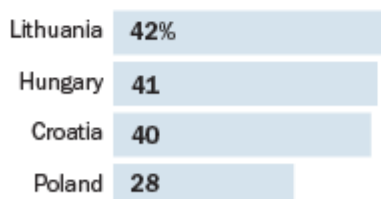
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### Among those in Orthodox-majority countries



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### Among those in Catholic-majority countries



Source: Survey conducted June 2015-July 2016 in 18 countries. See Methodology for details.  
"Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

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Source: "Religious Belief And National Belonging In Central And Eastern Europe". 2017. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>. Accessed on: 19.06.2022.

Appendix no: 9: Eparchies of the Serbian Orthodox Church (map)



Source: "Soubr:Map Of Eparchies Of Serbian Orthodox Church (Including Orthodox Ohrid Archbishopric)-En.Svg – Wikipedie". 2022. Cs.Wikipedia.Org. [https://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soubr:Map\\_of\\_Eparchies\\_of\\_Serbian\\_Orthodox\\_Church\\_\(including\\_Orthodox\\_Ohrid\\_Archbishopric\)-en.svg](https://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soubr:Map_of_Eparchies_of_Serbian_Orthodox_Church_(including_Orthodox_Ohrid_Archbishopric)-en.svg). Accessed on: 04.07.2022.

Appendix no. 10: Public Diplomacy related events in Serbia (table)

3.1 Serbia					
	Year	Date	Title	Type of event	Website
1.	2006	June 2006	The international conference "New Jerusalem" takes place in Moscow	Relationships with individuals/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/122120.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/122120.html</a>
2.		August 2006	Members of the International Foundation for the Unity of the Orthodox Nations received Patriarchal Awards	Relationships with individuals/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/134428.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/134428.html</a>
3.		August 2006	His Holiness Patriarch Pavel of Serbia thanked the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church for his support for the church unity of Serbia and Montenegro	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/131174.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/131174.html</a>
4.		October 2006	Church and community forum in Kaluga to discuss Kosovo Serbs	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/153701.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/153701.html</a>
5.		November 2006	"Domes of Russia" exhibition opened in Belgrade	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/166563.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/166563.html</a>
6.		November 2006	Kaluga hosted the international forum "Fraternal Serbia: History and Modernity"	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/161499.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/161499.html</a>

7.		December 2006	Vojislav Šešelj, who continues his hunger strike, receives only priests from the Russian and Serbian Churches	Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/169096.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/169096.html</a>
8.		January 2007	Bishop Artemij of Raška-Prizren thanked Moscow for its help in rebuilding ethnic Serb homes	Relationships with individuals/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/185407.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/185407.html</a>
9.		January 2007	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy meets with representatives of Russian and foreign media	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/179178.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/179178.html</a>
10.		March 2007	Metropolitan Kirill held a presentation of the Basic Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church in Belgrade	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220837.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220837.html</a>
11.		March 2007	Metropolitan Kirill consecrated the Russian Trinity Church in Belgrade	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/219814.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/219814.html</a>
12.		May 2007	A project devoted to Kosovo and Metohija opened in St. Petersburg	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/249853.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/249853.html</a>

13.	2007	June 2007	Metropolitan Kliment, administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate, met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia	Relationships with individuals/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/254295.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/254295.html</a>
14.		July 2007	Starting in November, the Orthodox television channel Spas will begin broadcasting in European countries	Strategic communications/Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/273896.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/273896.html</a>
15.		August 2007	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy met with Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to Russia Stanimir Vukicevich	Relationships with individuals/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/279686.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/279686.html</a>
16.		August 2007	Serbian Ambassador Visits Moscow Metochion of the Serbian Orthodox Church	Relationships with individuals/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/276611.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/276611.html</a>
17.		September 2007	The World Russian People's Council spoke in defense of Bishop Filaret of Mileshevo, who continues his hunger strike on the Serbian-Montenegrin border	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/291788.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/291788.html</a>

18.	October 2007	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy sent a greeting to the participants of the presentation of the Orthodox Encyclopedia in Belgrade	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/312975.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/312975.html</a>
19.	November 2007	DECR chairman meets with delegation of Serbian Orthodox Church	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/322505.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/322505.html</a>
20.	November 2007	Archimandrite Zacchaeus (Wood) participated in a reception on the occasion of the visit to Moscow of Serbian Foreign Minister H.E. Vuk Jeremic	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/329070.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/329070.html</a>
21.	December 2007	Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk led the Divine Liturgy at the Metochion of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Moscow	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/332556.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/332556.html</a>
22.	December 2007	Replies from His Holiness Patriarch Alexy	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/343692.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/343692.html</a>

23.	2008	January 2008	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy met with the head of the Royal House of Serbia and Yugoslavia, Prince Aleksandar II Karadjordjevic, and his wife, Princess Katarina	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/353673.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/353673.html</a>
24.		January 2008	Priests of the Russian Orthodox Church took part in a Serbian holiday	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/357663.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/357663.html</a>
25.		February 2008	Metropolitan Kirill: "We share in the bitterness and suffering of the Serbian people from whom a historical part of the country was torn away	Strategic communications/ Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/365377.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/365377.html</a>
26.		February 2008	Comments by His Holiness Patriarch Alexy and Sergey Mironov on Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence	Strategic communications/Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/366508.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/366508.html</a>
27.		February 2008	World Council of Churches leaders declare support for the people of Serbia	Strategic communications/Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/367897.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/367897.html</a>
28.		February 2008	Appeal of the World Russian People's Council in connection	Strategic communications/Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/367994.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/367994.html</a>



			with the separation of Kosovo and Metohija from Serbia		
29.	February 2008	The Primate of the Russian Church congratulated B. Tadić on his assumption of the office of President of the Republic of Serbia	Daily communications		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/369909.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/369909.html</a>
30.	June 2008	The Patriarchal program "Voices of Orthodox Russia" will be held in the republics of the former Yugoslavia	Strategic communications		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/431190.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/431190.html</a>
31.	July 2008	In the Russian church of St. Catherine the Great Martyr in Rome, a memorial service was held for the Serbian soldiers fallen in the Battle of Kosovo	Strategic communications		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/431276.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/431276.html</a>
32.	July 2008	A carved cross from Russia will be donated to St. Sava Cathedral in Belgrade	Strategic communications		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/434770.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/434770.html</a>
33.	July 2008	The "Voices of Orthodox Russia in Serbia" concert took place in the birthplace of Holy Equal-to-	Strategic communications		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/432758.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/432758.html</a>

			the-Apostles Emperor Constantine the Great		
34.	August 2008	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy: "Indifference to the fate of Kosovo's shrines is a manifestation of cultural decadence	Daily communications		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/443678.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/443678.html</a>
35.	October 2008	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy met with the Serbian Ambassador to Russia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/474868.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/474868.html</a>
36.	February 2009	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia received a delegation from the Serbian Orthodox Church	Strategic communications		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/549564.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/549564.html</a>
37.	March 2009	On the eve of the fifth anniversary of the start of the anti-Serb pogroms in Kosovo and Metohija, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill called for support for the victims to restore justice and hope in the hearts of people in Kosovo Serbia	Strategic communications/Daily communications		<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/583358.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/583358.html</a>

38.	2009	March 2009	In the Pskov military church of St. Alexander Nevsky a memorial service was held for those killed in the bombings in Yugoslavia	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/386782.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/386782.html</a>
39.		March 2009	Message of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill on the Tenth Anniversary of the NATO Bombing of Yugoslavia read at public meeting in Belgrade	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/598040.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/598040.html</a>
40.		April 2009	Serbian businessman Nenad Popovic awarded the Order of Holy Prince Daniel of Moscow III degree	Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/603409.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/603409.html</a>
41.		September 2009	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Serbia to the Russian Federation Jelica Kurjak	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/731690.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/731690.html</a>
42.		October 2009	Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations met with Serbian Foreign Minister	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/805919.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/805919.html</a>

43.	November 2009	A delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church completed its visit to Serbia	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/948963.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/948963.html</a>
44.	October 2010	The chairman of the DECR visited the monastery of Vysoki Dechani	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1290358.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1290358.html</a>
45.	October 2010	His Holiness Irinej, Patriarch of Serbia, received a delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church	Strategic communications/Relationship with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1290362.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1290362.html</a>
46.	October 2010	Members of the Russian Orthodox Church delegation visited the Russian Necropolis in Belgrade	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1291057.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1291057.html</a>
47.	December 2010	DECR Chairman met with Serbian Foreign Minister	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1342711.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1342711.html</a>
48.	March 2011	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk met with His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1442347.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1442347.html</a>

49.	2011	April 2011	Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations met with Serbian President Boris Tadić	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1442583.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1442583.html</a>
50.		April 2011	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk met with Serbian Foreign Minister	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1443225.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1443225.html</a>
51.		April 2011	His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia and members of the Serbian government attended a concert of Russian spiritual music	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1444050.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1444050.html</a>
52.		April 2011	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk: The Russian and Serbian peoples are bound by the Orthodox faith	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1445925.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1445925.html</a>
53.		July 2011	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk began a working trip to Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1579754.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1579754.html</a>
54.		July 2011	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk met with Patriarch Irinej of Serbia	Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1580835.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1580835.html</a>

55.		September 2011	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk interview with the Serbian newspaper Politika	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1610730.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1610730.html</a>
56.		September 2011	The Russian Orthodox Church held a prayer service in Belgrade for the salvation of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1625571.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1625571.html</a>
57.		January 2012	Interview with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for the Serbian newspaper Večernje Novosti	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1986268.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1986268.html</a>
58.		January 2012	His Holiness Irinej, Patriarch of Serbia, performed a service at the Russian Orthodox Church in Belgrade	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1988348.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1988348.html</a>
59.		February 2012	The monasteries of the Russian Orthodox Church started collecting money to help Orthodox Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2015181.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2015181.html</a>
60.	2012	March 2012	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk met with Serbian Foreign Minister V. Jeremic. Jeremić	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2087209.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2087209.html</a>

61.	April 2012	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets Serbian Interior Minister J. Dačić	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2138072.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2138072.html</a>
62.	May 2012	Patriarchal congratulations to President-elect Tomislav Nikolic of the Republic of Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2244821.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2244821.html</a>
63.	November 2012	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with Dušan Bajatović, deputy chairman of the Socialist Party of Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2562192.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2562192.html</a>
64.	November 2012	DECR Chairman to Visit Serbia and the Republika Srpska	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2592751.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2592751.html</a>
65.	November 2012	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk met with the President of Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2596920.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2596920.html</a>
66.	November 2012	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk met with Serbian Prime Minister I. Dačić	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2598965.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2598965.html</a>
67.	November 2012	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk met with His	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2599016.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2599016.html</a>

			Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia		
68.		December 2012	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk: Attempts to rob the Serbian people of their centuries-long history and suppress their historical memory continue unabated	Strategic communications/Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2643150.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2643150.html</a>
69.		April 2013	DECR representative addressed the Russian State Duma on the role of the Church in contemporary Russian-Serbian relations	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2917743.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2917743.html</a>
70.		May 2013	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill received the honorary chairman of the Democratic Party of Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3004411.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3004411.html</a>
71.	2013	May 2013	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with Honorary Chairman of the Democratic Party of Serbia B. Tadić	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3004433.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3004433.html</a>



72.	June 2013	His Holiness Irinej, Patriarch of Serbia, celebrated a service at the Russian Orthodox Church in Belgrade	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3065045.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3065045.html</a>
73.	July 2013	Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church performed a prayer service in the cross church of the residence of His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3105363.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3105363.html</a>
74.	July 2013	Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church arrives in Moscow	Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3103629.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3103629.html</a>
75.	October 2013	Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church Visits Serbian Monastery of Rakovica	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3292372.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3292372.html</a>
76.	October 2013	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill visited the Russian Orthodox Church in Belgrade	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3280768.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3280768.html</a>
77.	October 2013	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill participated in the meeting of the Primates and representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3283001.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3283001.html</a>

			with Serbian President T. Nikolic		
78.		October 2013	Archive materials on church life in Serbia from 1920 to 1940 transferred to the Serbian Orthodox Church	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3284733.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3284733.html</a>
79.		March 2014	Hierarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church visited Kemerovo	Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://eparchia.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3607922.html">http://eparchia.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3607922.html</a>
80.		May 2014	The Russian Orthodox Church in Belgrade announced the collection of humanitarian aid for the victims of the catastrophic floods	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3651153.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3651153.html</a>
81.		May 2014	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill's condolences to President of the Republic of Serbia T. Nikolic in connection with the catastrophic flooding in the country	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3652863.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3652863.html</a>
82.		May 2014	The Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church expressed gratitude to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and the Russian	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3654271.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3654271.html</a>

			people for their help and prayerful support		
83.	2014	May 2014	Employees of the Synodal Department for Ecclesiastical Charity visited a number of localities in flood-stricken Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3654331.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3654331.html</a>
84.		May 2014	The Russian Orthodox Church opened a fundraiser to help victims in Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3654820.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3654820.html</a>
85.		June 2014	On Holy Spirit Day, His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia celebrated Divine Liturgy at the Russian Orthodox Church in Belgrade	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3672432.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3672432.html</a>
86.		July 2014	Message from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia to His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3683899.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3683899.html</a>
87.		July 2014	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill informed the Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church about the measures taken by the	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3684113.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3684113.html</a>

			Russian Orthodox Church to help the victims of the flood in Serbia		
88.	August 2014		On the hundredth anniversary of the start of World War I, Serbian Patriarch Irinej led a commemoration of Russian soldiers in Belgrade	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3700548.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3700548.html</a>
89.	August 2014		Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk met with Serbian Patriarch Irinej and members of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3710491.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3710491.html</a>

Appendix no. 11: Public Diplomacy related events in Montenegro (table)

<b>3.2 Montenegro</b>					
	Year	Date	Title	Type of event	Website
1.	2006	January 2006	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy met with the Ambassador of Serbia and Montenegro to the Russian Federation	Daily communications/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/80253.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/80253.html</a>
2.		January 2006	His Holiness the Patriarch chaired a meeting of the founders and a joint meeting of the Board of Trustees of the International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Nations	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/80271.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/80271.html</a>
3.		January 2006	Address of His Holiness Patriarch Alexy to Patriarch Pavle of Serbia, President of Serbia B. Tadić, President of Montenegro F. Vujanović. Tadić and President of Montenegro F. Vujanović	Strategic communication	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/78785.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/78785.html</a>
4.		March 2006	Advisor to the Prime Minister of Montenegro called the bringing of the right hand of St. John the Baptist to Russia a historical event	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/97982.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/97982.html</a>
5.		March 2006	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of	Strategic communications/Relationships	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/99468.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/99468.html</a>

		Montenegro Milan Rocen	ps with individuals	
6.	June 2006	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy met with the Foreign Minister of Montenegro	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/117426.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/117426.html</a> ; <a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/117419.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/117419.html</a>
7.	June 2006	The Foundation for the Unity of the Orthodox nations will award the Patriarch Alexy Prize for the first time	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/119224.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/119224.html</a>
8.	June 2006	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets with the President of the Republic of Montenegro	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/118473.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/118473.html</a>
9.	September 2006	Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations met with the President of Montenegro	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/145498.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/145498.html</a>
10.	September 2006	DECR Chairman met with Montenegrin Foreign Minister	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/141995.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/141995.html</a>
11.	March 2007	DECR Chairman met with Montenegrin Prime Minister	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220344.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220344.html</a>
12.	March 2007	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with Milo Dukanovic, Prime Minister of Montenegro	Strategic communications/Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220272.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220272.html</a>

13.	2007	July 2007	Primate of the Russian Church celebrated Liturgy at Butovo test site	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/265583.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/265583.html</a>
14.		July 2007	On Victory Day, the Rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Schools celebrated a requiem service in Podgorica, Montenegro	Daily communications/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/273896.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/273896.html</a>
15.		July 2008	A delegation from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy took part in a procession of many thousands to celebrate the holiday of St. Basil of Ostrogsk in Niksic (Montenegro)	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/435327.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/435327.html</a>
16.		August 2008	A delegation from the St. Petersburg Orthodox Theological Academy made a pilgrimage trip to the shrines of Montenegro	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/442692.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/442692.html</a>
17.		August 2008	A delegation from the St. Petersburg Orthodox Theological Academy made a pilgrimage trip to the shrines of Montenegro	Daily communications/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/443729.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/443729.html</a>
18.		January 2009	Russian Cossacks to Protect the Cetinje Monastery in Montenegro	Strategic communication	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/535394.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/535394.html</a>
19.	February	The Foundation for the Unity of the	Strategic	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/561236.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/561236.html</a>	

		2009	Orthodox nations will award the Patriarch Alexy Prize for the first time	communication/Relationship with individuals	<a href="#">tml</a>
20.	2009	February 2009	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets with the President of the Republic of Montenegro	Strategic communication/Relationship with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/568264.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/568264.html</a>
21.		May 2009	Representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church took part in church celebrations in Montenegro	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/643657.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/643657.html</a>
22.		July 2009	Metropolitan Amfilohij consecrated the Church of St. Sergius of Radonezh, built in Montenegro with the support of Siberian benefactors	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/699876.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/699876.html</a>
23.		July 2011	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk visited the Monastery of Cetinje in Montenegro	Strategic communication/Relationship with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1581492.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1581492.html</a>
24.		July 2011	Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations met with the President of Montenegro	Strategic communication/Relationship with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1580943.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1580943.html</a>
25.		July 2011	DECR Chairman met with Montenegrin Foreign Minister	Strategic communication/Relationship with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1581496.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1581496.html</a>
26.		July 2011	DECR Chairman met with	Strategic	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1581499.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1581499.html</a>



			Montenegrin Prime Minister	communication/Relationship with individuals	<a href="#">html</a>
27.	2011	August 2011	Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk: The task of the DECR is to strengthen the unity of the Russian Orthodox Church in the post-Soviet space	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1590902.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1590902.html</a>
28.		October 2011	Delegations from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and other countries took part in the Second Pan-Balkan Conference of Orthodox Youth in Montenegro	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1656993.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1656993.html</a>
29.		July 2012	An Orthodox camp organized with the support of the Synod Department for Youth Affairs began its work in Montenegro	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2365267.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2365267.html</a>
30.		September 2013	In Montenegro, the church in the name of St. Alexander Nevsky was consecrated	Strategic communication	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3239738.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3239738.html</a>
31.		October 2013	A delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church took part in a solemn meeting at the walls of the Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Podgorica	Strategic communication	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3286750.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3286750.html</a>

32.	2013	October 2013	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with Milo Dukanovic, Prime Minister of Montenegro	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3284736.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3284736.html</a>
33.		October 2013	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3286455.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3286455.html</a>
34.		October 2013	A delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church took part in a solemn meeting at the walls of the Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Podgorica	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3286750.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3286750.html</a>
35.		December 2013	Metropolitan Theodosius of Tambov and Rasskazovsky visited Montenegro and venerated the cross of St. Pitirim of Tambov in Kotor	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://eparchia.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3413181.html">http://eparchia.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3413181.html</a>
36.	2014	May 2014	Primate of the Russian Church celebrated Liturgy at Butovo test site	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3644624.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3644624.html</a>
37.		May 2014	On Victory Day, the Rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Schools celebrated a requiem service in Podgorica, Montenegro	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3644666.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3644666.html</a>
38.		May 2014	A delegation from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy took part in a	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3649204.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3649204.html</a>

			procession of many thousands to celebrate the holiday of St. Basil of Ostrogsk in Niksic (Montenegro)		
39.		May 2014	A delegation from the St. Petersburg Orthodox Theological Academy made a pilgrimage trip to the shrines of Montenegro	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3649434.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3649434.html</a>

Appendix no. 12: Public Diplomacy related events in Republika Srpska (table)

3.3 Republika Srpska					
	Year	Date	Title	Type of the event	Website
1.	2005	May 2005	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy met with the Chairman of the Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina B. Paravac	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/7821.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/7821.html</a>
2.	2007	October 2007	Patriarchal condolences on the death of the President of the Republika Srpska, Milan Jelić	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/302654.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/302654.html</a>
3.		February 2008	The XIV International Conference of the Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Nations takes place in Banja Luka (Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina)	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/371380.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/371380.html</a>
4.	2008	July 2008	Patriarchal programme "Voices of Orthodox Russia" in the Republic of Srpska and Montenegro	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/435327.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/435327.html</a>

5.		October 2008	The Primate of the Russian Church presented a high church award to Bishop Vasily Zvornychko-Tuzla	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/471765.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/471765.html</a>
6.		December 2008	Metropolitan Kirill, Patriarchal Locum Tenens, meets with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Srpska (Bosnia and Herzegovina)	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/511766.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/511766.html</a>
7.		May 2012	Patriarchal congratulations to the President-elect of the Republic of Serbia, Tomislav Nikolic	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2244821.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2244821.html</a>
8.		September 2012	The international forum for religious and community leaders "Living Together - Our Future" opened in Sarajevo	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2458785.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2458785.html</a>
9.	2012	November 2012	The Chairman of the DECC to visit Serbia and the Republika Srpska	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2592751.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2592751.html</a>
10.		November 2012	Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate meets with	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2598978.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2598978.html</a>

			the President of the Republika Srpska, M. Dodik		
11	2013	November 2013	The Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations met with the President of the National Assembly of the Republika Srpska I. Radojicic	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3385417.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3385417.html</a>
12		March 2014	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets with the President of Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3602821.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3602821.html</a>
13	2014	March 2014	His Holiness Patriarch Kirill chaired the 14th award ceremony of the International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Nations	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3602640.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3602640.html</a>
14		March 2014	Primate of the Russian Church meets with awardees of the Foundation for the Unity of the Orthodox Nations	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3602841.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3602841.html</a>

Appendix no. 13: Public Diplomacy related events in North Macedonia (table)

3.4 North Macedonia					
	Year	Date	Title	Type of event	Website
1.	2006	January 2006	In an interview with a Macedonian newspaper, His Holiness explains his position on the Macedonian issue	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/77273.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/77273.html</a>
2.		February 2006	His Holiness Patriarch Alexy meets Macedonian Ambassador to Russia	Relationships with individuals/Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/84510.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/84510.html</a>
3.		March 2006	His Holiness the Patriarch chaired the founders' meeting and the joint meeting of the Board of Trustees of the International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Nations	Relationships with individuals/Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/99468.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/99468.html</a>
4.		April 2006	Pressure on the Serbian Orthodox Church	Daily communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/104824.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/104824.html</a>

			believers continues in Macedonia		
5.		May 2006	His Holiness the Patriarch presented awards to the European Committee on Awards and Prizes of the United Nations	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/115408.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/115408.html</a>
6.		June 2006	Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, Secretary of the Moscow Patriarchate for Inter-Orthodox Relations, met with Risto Nikovski, Ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia to Russia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/122308.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/122308.html</a>
7.	2007	April 2007	Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad received a delegation of Orthodox Church hierarchs in the Republic of Macedonia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/231183.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/231183.html</a>



8.	2008	July 2008	The Patriarchal programme "Voices of Orthodox Russia" will take place in the republics of the former Yugoslavia	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/431190.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/431190.html</a>
9.	2009	May 2009	Primate of the Russian Church presided over the award ceremony for the International Prize of Saints Cyril and Methodius	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/657253.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/657253.html</a>
10.		June 2009	Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations received a delegation from the Republic of Macedonia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/682676.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/682676.html</a>
11.		December 2009	Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations meets with the President of the Republic of Macedonia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/960831.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/960831.html</a>

12.	2010	May 2010	Representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church take part in an international conference on dialogue of religions and civilisations in Macedonia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/95007.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/95007.html</a>
13.		September 2010	The Council of Europe Meeting on the Religious Dimension of Intercultural Dialogue ends in Macedonia	Strategic communications	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1275657.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1275657.html</a>
14.	2011	August 2011	The International Inter-Religious Conference "Religion in the Service of Man" was held in Sofia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1593151.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1593151.html</a>
15.	2013	January 2013	The Chairman of the External Church Relations Department received the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2757178.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2757178.html</a>

16.		May 2013	Representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church meet with the President of the Republic of Macedonia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2967563.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2967563.html</a>
17.	2014	June 2014	Rector of the Moscow Theological Schools visits St Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3672149.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3672149.html</a>
18.		June 2014	Rector of Moscow Theological Schools meets Macedonian president	Strategic communications /Relationships with individuals	<a href="http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3672272.html">http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3672272.html</a>

Appendix no. 14: Public diplomacy achievements in Serbia

4.1 Serbia					
	Year	Type	Topic	Title	Source
1.	2007	Resolution	Kosovo	Resolution of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia on the Necessity of Resolving the Issue of the Autonomous Province Kosovo and Metohia Based on International Law	Narodna Skupština Republike Srbije. 2007. "Rezolucija Narodne Skupštine Republike Srbije O Neophodnosti Pravednog Rešavanja Pitanja Autonomne Pokrajine Kosovo I Metohija Zasnovanog Na Međunarodnom Pravu." pg. 3.
2.	2010	Decision	Kosovo	The Decision on the Continuation of the Activities of the Republic of Serbia in Defense Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of the Republic Serbia	Narodna Skupština Republike Srbije. 2010. "Odluka O Nastavku Aktivnosti Republike Srbije U Odbrani Suvereniteta I Teritorijalnog Integriteta Republike Srbije." pg. 2.
3.	2017	Decision proposal	Kosovo	Proposal for a decision on the establishment of a Board of Inquiry to determine the facts and circumstances that led to a dramatic increase in violence against Serbs and non-Albanian populations in the north of the AP of Kosovo and Metohija in the period from 2013 to today	<a href="http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/cir/pdf/akta_procedura/2017/02-4122_17.pdf">http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/cir/pdf/akta_procedura/2017/02-4122_17.pdf</a>
4.	2018	Decision proposal	Kosovo	Proposal for a decision on the establishment of a Board of Inquiry to determine the facts and circumstances related to the declaration of the fake state of Kosovo, the impact that the Opinion of the International Court of Justice had on it, and the responsibility of the former President of the Republic of Serbia Boris Tadić in this regard	<a href="http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/cir/pdf/akta_procedura/2018/764-18.pdf">http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/cir/pdf/akta_procedura/2018/764-18.pdf</a>
5.	2018	Decision	NATO	The Decision on the Formation of the Commission to Investigate the Consequences of the NATO Bombing in 1999 on the Health of the Citizens of Serbia, as well as Impact on the Environment, With Special Reference to the Consequences Left by the Use of Projectile with Depleted Uranium	<a href="http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/ost_ala_akta/2018/RS26-18%20lat.pdf">http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/ost_ala_akta/2018/RS26-18%20lat.pdf</a>

6.	2019	Law	Culture	The Law on the Confirmation of the Agreement Between the Governments Republic of Serbia and the Government of the Russian Federation on the Establishment and Conditions of Activity Cultural and Informational Centers	<a href="http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/zakoni/2021/1399-21-lat.pdf">http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/zakoni/2021/1399-21-lat.pdf</a>
7.	2019	Law	Culture	The Law On the Confirmation of the Agreement Between the Governments Republic of Serbia and the Government of the Russian Federation On the Delivery of the Petersburg Paper Miroslav's Gospel to the Republic Serbia and the Picture of Nikolaj Konstantinovic Roerich to the Russian Federation	<a href="http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/zakoni/2020/2982-19%20-lat..pdf">http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/zakoni/2020/2982-19%20-lat..pdf</a>
8.	2019	Statement	Relations	Relations between Serbia and the Russian Federation are at a historically high level	<a href="http://www.parlament.gov.rs/Odnosi_Srbije_i_Ruske_Federacije_na_istorijski_najvi%C5%A1em_nivou.36031.941.html">http://www.parlament.gov.rs/Odnosi_Srbije_i_Ruske_Federacije_na_istorijski_najvi%C5%A1em_nivou.36031.941.html</a>
9.	2020	Law	Kosovo	The Law About Cultural Heritage	<a href="http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/zakoni/2021/2145-21.%20-%20lat..pdf">http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/lat/pdf/zakoni/2021/2145-21.%20-%20lat..pdf</a>