

UDC 94(437.3:477.87)“1919/1921”
DOI 10.24919/2519-058X.25.269558

Oleksandr KRAVCHUK

PhD (History), Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of World History at Vinnytsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University, 32 K. Ostrozky Street, Vinnytsia, Ukraine, postal code 21001 (ol-kravchuk@i.ua)

ORCID: 0000-0003-3504-5041
Researcher ID: M-6141-2018

Olha MURASHOVA

PhD (History), Teacher of the Department of World History at Vinnytsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University, 32 K. Ostrozky Street, Vinnytsia, Ukraine, postal code 21001 (olia2405@i.ua)

ORCID: 0000-0002-1618-8381
Researcher ID: AGH-3811-2022

Олександр КРАВЧУК

кандидат історичних наук, доцент кафедри всесвітньої історії Вінницького державного педагогічного університету імені Михайла Коцюбинського, вул. К. Острозького, 32, м. Вінниця, Україна, індекс 21001 (ol-kravchuk@i.ua)

Ольга МУРАШОВА

кандидат історичних наук, викладач кафедри всесвітньої історії Вінницького державного педагогічного університету імені Михайла Коцюбинського, вул. К. Острозького, 32, м. Вінниця, Україна, індекс 21001 (olia2405@i.ua)

Bibliographic Description of the Article: Kravchuk, O. & Murashova, O. (2022). Internal and External Factors of the Czechoslovak Policy Formation Concerning the Autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus in 1919 – 1921. *Skhidnoievropeiskyi Istorychnyi Visnyk [East European Historical Bulletin]*, 25, 149–165. doi: 10.24919/2519-058X.25.269558

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK POLICY FORMATION CONCERNING THE AUTONOMY OF SUBCARPATHIAN RUS IN 1919 – 1921

Abstract. *The purpose of the research is to elucidate the internal and external factors of the Czechoslovak Republic policy formation concerning the autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus (the Transcarpathian region) in 1919 – 1921. The research methodology is based on a combination of general scientific (systematization, analysis and synthesis, abstraction, generalization) and special historical (historical systemic, historical critical, historical comparative, historical typological, specific problematic) and interdisciplinary research methods, taking into account the principles of historicism, systematicity, scientificity and verification. The scientific novelty consists in the authors' attempt to highlight the specified issue based on the latest historiographical heritage, as well as published and unpublished sources. Due to the study of the above-mentioned materials, it was possible to analyze the influence of external and internal factors on the Czechoslovak policy formation concerning the*

autonomous status of Subcarpathian Rus objectively. **The Conclusion.** Thus, the complex internal and external circumstances of the region's integration into the Czechoslovak Republic led to the development of a new administrative system under the conditions of the military dictatorship that lasted in 1919 – 1922. Autonomous regional institutions were not fully developed in the First Czechoslovak Republic. There was no even comprehensive programme for a gradual introduction of autonomy by the authorities of the Czechoslovak Republic. The administrative system development was carried out under conditions of putting off the implementation of the constitutional provisions on autonomy. Despite the fact that there were objective reasons for this state of affairs, due to the presence of the ChSR leadership's subjective views on the issue of autonomy as a possible factor of destabilization in a multinational country, and in particular, in Subcarpathian Rus, the disappointment of representatives of all political circles in the region resulted in the development of the autonomist movement, which became the centre of the region's political life during the interwar period.

Key words: autonomy, internal policy, national issue, national minorities, Subcarpathian Rus, the Ruthenians, the Czechoslovak Republic.

ВНУТРІШНІ ТА ЗОВНІШНІ ЧИННИКИ ФОРМУВАННЯ ЧЕХОСЛОВАЦЬКОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ ЩОДО АВТОНОМІЇ ПІДКАРПАТСЬКОЇ РУСИ у 1919 – 1921 рр.

Анотація. Мета статті полягає у розкритті внутрішніх та зовнішніх чинників формування політики Чехословацької республіки щодо автономії Підкарпатської Русі у 1919 – 1921 рр. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на поєднанні загальнонаукових (систематизації, аналізу і синтезу, абстрагування, узагальнення) зі спеціально-історичними (історико-системним, історико-критичним, історико-порівняльним, історико-типологічним, конкретно-проблемним) та міждисциплінарними методами дослідження, з урахуванням принципів історизму, системності, науковості та верифікації. **Наукова новизна** полягає у спробі авторів висвітлити означену проблему на основі новітніх історіографічних надбань, а також опублікованих та неопублікованих джерел. Вивчення комплексу цих матеріалів уможливило об'єктивний аналіз впливу зовнішніх і внутрішніх чинників на формування чехословацької політики щодо автономного статусу Підкарпатської Русі. **Висновки.** Отже, комплекс складних внутрішніх і зовнішніх обставин інтеграції регіону до складу Чехословацької республіки зумовили розбудову нової адміністративної системи в умовах військової диктатури, що тривала у 1919 – 1922 рр. У повному обсязі автономні інституції краю у Першій Чехословацькій республіці не були розбудовані. Цілісної програми поетапного запровадження автономії владою ЧСР представлено не було. Розбудова адміністративної системи здійснювалася в умовах відтермінування реалізації конституційних положень про автономію. Незважаючи на наявність об'єктивних причин цього, за присутності суб'єктивних поглядів керівництва ЧСР на питання автономії як можливого чинника дестабілізації у багатонаціональній країні, і зокрема, в Підкарпатській Русі, розчарування представників усіх політичних напрямів у краї вилилося у розгортання автономістського руху, що став віссю політичного життя регіону у міжвоєнний період.

Ключові слова: автономія, внутрішня політика, національне питання, національні меншини, Підкарпатська Русь, русини, Чехословацька республіка.

The Problem Statement. Due to the fact that the Ukrainians could not defend their statehood in 1917 – 1921, their ethnic lands came under control of Russia, Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia (Danylenko & Kotsur, 2021, 6). Subcarpathian Rus belonged to the Czechoslovak Republic (CSR) (nowadays – Transcarpathian region of Ukraine). Subcarpathian Rus got its name from the self-name of the native Slavic population of the region – the Ruthenians. At the same time, it should be noted that the top leadership of the Czechoslovak SSR, in particular, T. G. Masaryk and E. Beneš, considered the Ruthenians to be the part of the Ukrainian people (Kravchuk, 2008, p. 13). In Czechoslovakia, it was the only national minority whose representatives expressed the desire to join it, became its state-building element and received a guarantee of the territorial autonomy at the Paris Peace

Conference, which was an exceptional example of such status among all post-war treaties (Degtyarev & Samoilenko, 2019, p. 100). In Czechoslovakia, Subcarpathian Rus became the only region with guaranteed rights of the territorial autonomy, which determined the main direction and complexity of developing the administrative bodies. The resolution of the issue regarding the autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus became a crucial aspect of the Czechoslovak Republic internal policy.

The Analysis of Recent Research Papers and Publications. Significant historiographical achievements were accumulated in the study of this issue. There were analyzed the reasons for the Czech and the Slovak politicians' interest, in particular, the first president of Czechoslovakia, T. G. Masaryk, in the incorporation of the territories of modern Transcarpathia into the Czechoslovak Republic, as well as such key issues as establishment of administrative territorial borders, determination of the scope of autonomy in international and Czechoslovak legal norms and establishment of administrative institutions of Subcarpathian Rus (Boldyžhar & Mosny, 2002; Brandejs, 1936; Bysaga, 1997; Ghranchak & Prykhodjko, 1999; Hanchyn, 1985; Hubený & Kruglova 2020; Zhuravs'kyj-Ghrajevs'kyj, 1990; Krempa, 1978; Lichtej, 1995; Mahochii, 1994; Pop, 1999, 2005, 2006, 2010; Pushkash, 2007; Raušer, 1936; Shandor, 1992; Švorc, 1997, 1999; Shevchenko, 2006, 2009; Vanat, 1979; Vidnyanskyy, 1994, 2000, 2003, 2012; etc.). In addition, modern researchers focused on the institutional foundations of the formation and functioning of local public authorities in Transcarpathia as the part of the Czech SSR (Hrehirchak, 2010), the attitude of local (Transcarpathian) and all-Czechoslovak political parties to the issue of regional autonomy (Pikovs'ka, 2020; Tokar, 2006). Some aspects of the mentioned above issues were analyzed in general works on the history of Transcarpathia during the interwar period (Zakarpatija, 2010; Narisy istoriyi Zakarpattia, 1995).

But at the same time, the actual complex of internal and external factors in determining the Czechoslovak policy concerning the autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus was covered insufficiently. A thorough study of the specified issue gives the opportunity to do analysis of important sources of the history of the Czechoslovak SSR, a significant part of which have been published or republished recently. It is about the correspondence of the Czechoslovak SSR top leadership (Korespondence T. G. Masaryk – Antonín Švehla, 2012; Korespondence T. G. Masaryk – Edvard Beneš 1918 – 1937, 2013), the works written by T. G. Masaryk (Masaryk, 2003, 2017), E. Beneš (Beneš, 2005), Yu. Brashhajko (Brashhajko, 2009), the collection of archival documents “Tomas Masaryk and the Ukrainians” (Topinka, 2010). The study of the above-mentioned materials in combination with previously published sources, in particular, the works, written by E. Benesh (Beneš) (Benesh, 1925, 1934), G. Žatkovič (Expozé Dr. G. I. Žatkoviča, 1921), international and Czechoslovak documents regarding the legal status of Subcarpathian Rus, archival materials, historiographic achievements prove significant research potential, and, therefore, the topicality of the above mentioned issue.

Hence, **the purpose of the article** is to elucidate the internal and external factors of the Czechoslovak Republic policy formation concerning the autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus (the Transcarpathian region) in 1919 – 1921.

The Results of the Research. The leaders of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic set their goal “to create a new politically, socially and economically just state” (Beneš, 2005, p. 167). They presented it as a democratic state that ensured compliance with human rights and in which representatives of different nationalities could live. At the same time, the Czechoslovak Republic was declared a national state of the Czechs and the Slovaks, which aimed at ensuring

their rights (Serapionova, 2007, p. 90). The inclusion of numerous national minorities in the Czechoslovak Republic was determined by a number of factors: economic, strategic, historical, etc. The geopolitical and strategic calculations of the leader of the Czechoslovak liberation movement, T. G. Masaryk, also played an important role in the case of joining the territory inhabited by the Ruthenians to the Czechoslovak Republic. The territory was assigned the role of a connecting territorial link between the Czechoslovak Republic and its potential ally Romania, which prevented the territorial delimitation of Hungary and Poland (Masaryk, 2017, pp. 83, 92), with which Prague had territorial disputes claims. In addition, according to the Czech historian J. Ryhlik, “To Czechoslovakia as a country of a medium size, the expansion of the territory was of great importance” (Vehesh, Vidnianskyi & Chavarha 2022, p. 105). Furthermore, the Slavophile ideas played a certain role in the case of the Ruthenians. Hence, on May 30, 1918, while delivering a speech in front of the Czech and the Slovak emigrants in Pittsburgh, T. G. Masaryk for the first time mentioned the initiative of the immigrants from Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia) in the United States to join the region of their parents to the future state of the Czechs and the Slovaks: “It is the Slavic idea, which matured in this war so wonderfully” (Masaryk, 2017, p. 84). Obviously, it was about strengthening the Slavic majority in the projected state, which at that time was supposed to include the German and Hungarian minorities. On October 25, 1918, negotiations began between T. G. Masaryk and G. Žatkovič regarding the possible accession of the region to future Czechoslovakia. The discussion took place among the American Ruthenians themselves, the highest peak was the November plebiscite with the participation of 1,089 delegates. Among them, 732 delegates (67%) spoke in favour of joining their parents’ region to Czechoslovakia on the basis of broad autonomy (Hubený & Kruglova, 2020, p. 89; Kravchuk, 2021, p. 316).

In the region itself, local public figures did not have a single political programme. Some of them supported the idea to leave the region in the Hungarian state, the others – advocated joining the Ukrainian People’s Republic or the Czechoslovak Republic. Due to the foreign political circumstances, the Czechoslovak version of the statehood of modern Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia) became a reality. The Central Ruthenian People’s Council (CRPC), formed in Uzhhorod, at the general meeting on May 8 in 1919, spoke out in favour of combining its future with the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (this position was supported from the very beginning by Priashiv People’s Council, headed by Anton Beskyd (Hubený & Kruglova, 2020, p. 94).

The establishment of power of the Czechoslovak SSR in Subcarpathian Rus, sanctioned by the Entente, began with the entry of the Czechoslovak military units into Uzhhorod on January 12, 1919 (Raušer, 1936, p. 69). A few days later, the Romanian troops occupied the southeastern regions of Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia) (Dzjubko & Spivak, 1967, p. 229).

Prague sought to strengthen the presence of the Czechoslovak SSR in the region, in particular, to gain the support of the local Ruthenian figures regarding the unification of the region with the state of the Czechs and the Slovaks (Shevchenko, 2006, p. 108). The Czechoslovak delegation also advocated the region’s accession to the Czechoslovak Republic at the Paris Peace Conference on February 5, 1919, in his speech in front of the Council of Ten, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Republic E. Beneš touched on the issue of the Ruthenians of Hungary. He stated the following: “although the Ruthenian Carpathians of the Carpathians and the Galician Ukrainians are of the same origin, they are still separated by the Carpathians; their social and economic living conditions bring them closer to the Slovaks; the Ruthenian Carpathians do not want the Hungarian government and suggest creating a close federation with the Czechoslovak Republic” (Zhuravs’kyj-

Ghrajevs'kyj, 1990, p. 132). On March 3–4, 1919, in Paris, the representatives of the American People's Council of Hungarian-Ruthenians, who supported this idea in the USA at the end of 1918 actively, G. Žatkovič and Yu. Gardosh, handed over their project of the state-legal status of the “Hungarian-Ruthenian State” to the leaders delegations of the Czechoslovak Republic – K. Kramarzh and E. Beneš (Expozé Dr. G. I. Žatkoviča, 1921, p. 83). The Entente countries did not raise objections regarding the accession of the territories of modern Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia) to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. Prague received further accession support after the declaration of the Soviet power in Hungary (Pop, 2005, p. 294).

On April 23, 1919, under the command of the eastern army group, the representative of the French military mission in the Czechoslovak Republic, General commander E. Sh. A. Ennok, the Czechoslovak units began to take control of strongholds in the central and eastern parts of the region (Vidnyansky, 2003, p. 633). During the war between the Czechoslovak SSR and Romania with the Soviet Hungary (April 27 – July 7, 1919), the military dictatorship headed by General E. Sh. A. Ennok was unofficially introduced in the western part of the region on June 6, 1919 (Pop, 2006, p. 398). By August 25, 1920, the 10th Infantry Division of the Czechoslovak SSR troops, numbering more than 14,000 people, occupied the territory of Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia) (Popovych, 2019, p. 98; Dzjubko & Spivak, 1967, pp. 94–95). At the same time, the former zhyhnyi (county) territorial unit (Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, Berehiv, Velkosevliush and Maramoros zhyhnyi (counties)) was left in a somewhat reorganized form (Pop, 2006, p. 219).

On May, 1919, the Ukrainian National People's Republic in Uzhhorod decided to join the region to the Czechoslovak SSR on the basis of the federal principle (Krempa, 1978, p. 721). The Ruthenian community's representation in the name of the new state was supposed to be expression of the above-mentioned desire. It was meant to be called the Czechoslovak-Ruthenian Republic (Švorc, 1999, pp. 196). On May 23, 1919, those demands were submitted to the President of Czechoslovakia (Topinka, 2010, p. 29). On the authority of the CRPR, G. Žatkovič was supposed to conduct further negotiations with the President of the Czechoslovak Republic regarding the introduction of regional autonomy (Expozé Dr. G. I. Žatkoviča, 1921, p. 15).

The President agreed with the autonomous status of the Ruthenians in the Czechoslovak SSR, since they “express their own desire to be with us”. But he believed that “it does not follow that the Germans can demand the same” (Korespondence, 2013, p. 109). Taking into account the above-mentioned, it proves that the President was aware of the interconnectedness concerning the issue of the autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus with other national problems in the Czechoslovak SSR. In this regard, as early as on May 12, 1919, he expressed certain doubts to E. Beneš about the need for the winning countries to conclude an agreement with the Czechoslovak Republic on minorities, because it “gives the states the opportunity to campaign with their neighbours constantly. Hence, the Germans in our territories and the others”. The President advocated that the law on minorities adopted by the peace conference should be of a pan-European nature. Regarding the content of the agreements on minorities, which the Czechoslovak Republic was supposed to conclude with the Entente countries, he assumed the following: “At most, a general, framework [law]; it must exclude any state within a state” (Korespondence, 2013, p. 141). In general, the leading Czech politicians considered the federalization of the Czechoslovak Republic unacceptable (Petráš, 2019, p. 41). Therefore, the CRPR's political ideas could not affect the state legal status of the region in the the Czechoslovak SSR.

At the request of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the foundations of the

autonomous organization of the “Ruthenian Krainy (Territory)” (such name was introduced by the Hungarian law in December of 1918) were developed and presented on May 17 by E. Beneš in Paris. His view was based on the idea of giving this territory a “special legal nature” with considerable autonomy. Its administrative institutions were to include the local Parliament, the Governor, the Minister in the government of the Czechoslovak Republic. The powers of the autonomy were to cover language, school, religious and other matters of internal governance (Vanat, 1979, pp. 95–96). It was also envisaged to represent the Ruthenians in Parliament of the Czechoslovak SSR, and the state-wide judicial system was to extend to the autonomous territory. On May 17 and 23, 1919, the peace conference approved the project of E. Beneš (Nikolson, 1945, p. 261). The Ruthenians were to receive autonomy “mainly because they had never belonged to the Czech and the Slovak lands before” (Beneš, 2005, p. 121).

The negotiations between G. Žatkovič and T. G. Masaryk on the status of the Ruthenian territory intensified after the end of Czechoslovakia’s military operations with the Soviet Hungary. G. Žatkovič insisted on the fact that the autonomous Carpathian state within the Czechoslovak Republic should be called “Rusyniya”. Its borders were to be established according to the ethnic principle. T. G. Masaryk did not consider it possible due to the lack of a compact settlement of the Ruthenians to the west of the Uzh River, where the Slovaks lived next to them (Korespondence, 2013, p. 188).

If G. Žatkovič pondered over the settlement of relations with Prague from the standpoint of the region’s interests, the top management of the Czechoslovak SSR perceived this issue in the national context and sought to integrate the region into the country’s legal system. On July 8, 1919, T. G. Masaryk drew the attention of the Minister of Internal Affairs A. Švehla to the drastic need to resolve the issue of “administrative annexation of Rusynsk” and the national minorities issue. On July 22, 1919, he wrote to him about the need to take into account the region’s accession to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic when drafting the regulations on elections (Korespondence, 2012, p. 52) In this context, we should note D. Miller’s statement that A. Švehla gave “preference to a unitary state over a state with autonomous lands”. He “decided that a copy of the Czech administrative style would emerge in Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus...” (Miller, 2001, p. 66). In order to help General Ennok, the Civil Administration was established to organize the administration of the region, which was headed by the Czech J. Břejha on August 1, 1919 (Pop, 2005, p. 283). The administration performed the functions of the zemskiy government and, in part, the functions of central institutions (SATR, f. 29, d. 3, c. 13, p. 102). There were the following departments in the administrative body: political, school, judicial, police, health care, public works, post and communication, economic, financial, agriculture, social security (Pop, 2006, p. 163). At the same time, a temporary Ruthenian autonomous council (Directorate) with advisory functions was not appointed (according to T. G. Masaryk – a commission for autonomous affairs), (Korespondence, 2013, p. 196), which was agreed on the eve of G. Žatkovič’s departure to the USA (Pushkash, 2007, p. 68).

The transfer of the Czechoslovakian region became the subject of a special diplomatic act and agreement between Czechoslovakia and the Entente countries (Korespondence, 2013, p. 92). On September 10, 1919, in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Czechoslovakia signed the agreement on national minorities with England, France, Italy, Japan and the United States (Zbírka zákonů, 1921, pp. 2301–2215). The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic undertook to grant the region “the Ruthenians south of the Carpathians” autonomy, personified by a governor and a representative body – the diet with legislative rights in the field of language, religious

education, local government issues and all others that the laws of the Czechoslovak state would grant it. The Governor was supposed to be responsible for everything to the diet. The region was also guaranteed fair representation in Parliament of the Czechoslovak SSR.

On October 1, 1919, the military dictatorship was officially declared in the region, which lasted until January 9, 1922 (Kravchuk, 2008, p. 13; Pop, 2005, p. 283). Under the conditions of sabotage by the Hungarian officials and entrepreneurs, there was the only one possible option to govern with the help of the military. E. Sh. A. Ennok's task was the internal political stabilization of the region after the retreat of the Soviet Hungarian troops from its central part and the Romanian troops from the eastern part (Pop, 2006, p. 398). Later the Czechoslovak officials depicted the situation the following way: "The administration was in a complete decline. The Hungarian administrative institutions ceased their activities during the post-war period, mainly managing the estate of the military erar (the property of the military department – the authors), which individual employees and officials of the Hungarian army of that time sold off among local people. There was a state of complete chaos immediately after the coup. ..." (SATR, f. 29, d. 3, c. 706, pp. 96–97).

At that time, G. Žatkovič, who returned from a trip to the USA in order to participate in the first congress of Ruthenians in Homestead, resumed negotiations with the top leadership of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic concerning the implementation of the region's autonomous rights. The draft "General Statute of Subcarpathian Rus" was specifically discussed, the development of which was worked on by President T. G. Masaryk. On October 20, 1919, he sent A. Švehla "Outline of the General Statute of Subcarpathian Rus, joined to the Czechoslovak Republic by the Paris Peace Conference" (Masaryk, 2003, p. 55). According to J. Gořec, in the text of the statute T. G. Masaryk corrected the verb "establishes" to "organizes" in the phrase "organizes the Ruthenian territory". He argued that the French original text used the word "organizes". "The essence of this correction is not a philological interpretation. "Organizes" is less significant than "establishes". To organize means to carry out certain administrative measures, while "to establish" already indicates an independent autonomous system". J. Gořec made an assumption that in these actions of T. G. Masaryk "conceals the fear of excessive self-governing independence of Subcarpathia" (Dokumenty o Podkarpatské Rusi, 1997, pp. 86–87).

The government approved this document in a slightly modified form. The statute, which was a compilation of the most important legal norms of the autonomous entity, became the first internal act of the Czechoslovak SSR on the issue of the legal status of Subcarpathian Rus (Vidnyansky, 2012, p. 294). The first part of the document declared the main provisions of the Saint-Germain Peace Treaty regarding the region, the second part defined the demarcation line between it and Slovakia from the town of Chop to the northern part of Uzhhorod and further along the Uzh River to the Carpathians, the third part introduced the name "Subcarpathian Rus", allowing to use also the name "Rusynsko", declared the people's language as the official language and the language of education. The fourth, the final part of the document, was related to the basics of administrative organization. It was about the government's right to appoint a temporary administrator, a temporary Ruthenian Autonomous Directory with advisory powers in matters of self-government. These institutions were supposed to cease their activities with the introduction of the Constitution of the autonomous region. The document stated that the elections to the Autonomous Diet should be held no later than 90 days after the parliamentary elections in the Czechoslovak SSR (SATR, f. 12, d. 1, c. 13, pp. 2–4). By the way, the "Statute of the Ruthenian Autonomous

Directory”, which provided for its right of veto on the appointment and dismissal of employees in the region and was supposed to be the part of the “General Statute...” was not included in it (Krempa, 1978, p. 28, 30).

On October 24 and November 7, 1919, the authorities of the Czechoslovak SSR approved the “General Statute for the Organization and Administration of Subcarpathian Rus” and determined that it would be published in newly founded “The Government Newspaper of the Civil Administration of Subcarpathian Rus” (Korespondence, 2012, p. 728).

On November 18, 1919, General Ennok published the text of the “General Statute...”. The Directory of Subcarpathian Rus began its activities soon. But there was no coordinated activity in the three administrative centres. E. Sh. A. Ennok and J. Brejha treated the Directory with contempt, did not take its opinion into account when making decisions (Krempa, 1978, p. 729). Yu. Brashhajko mentioned that J. Brejha sabotaged the suggestions of the Directory (Brashhajko, 2009, p. 24). The Czechoslovak authorities never approved the Directory’s Charter, thereby weakening its position. Such actions of Prague could be explained by the Directory’s desire for maximum independence from the central government, although at the same time this regional body advocated far-reaching reforms in the region (Krempa, 1978, p. 731). The suggestion of the Directory to grant it the right to send 15 deputies to Parliament of the Czechoslovak Republic was ignored (Archiv Ústavu T. G. Masaryka, 1920). At the end of 1919, all this led to the suggestion made to the President by one of the members of the Directory, A. Voloshyn, to liquidate the Civil Administration, and to transfer its powers to the Directory, which would, thereby, acquire real power (Krempa, 1978, p. 730).

Under the conditions of criticism of J. Brejha by local figures (Topinka, 2010, pp. 44–45), on January 19, 1920, G. Žatkovič resumed negotiations in Prague with the aim of obtaining real powers for the Directory, solving the border issues of Subcarpathian Rus and Slovakia (Expozé Dr. G. I. Žatkoviča, 1921, p. 31). In general, local officials sought to join the entire zhupy (counties), parts of the Sharyshka and Spishka zhupy (counties), to the territory of the region, the basis of which were the former counties of Unh, Bereh, Uhoch, and Maramorosh. I. Pop considered those demands excessive. The representatives of the parliamentary faction from Slovakia were ready to concede a smaller part of Sharyshka and Uzhka zhupy (counties) (Pop, 2005, p. 301). The members of the Directory of Subcarpathian Rus did not agree to this decision, as a result of which the negotiations stopped (Brashhajko, 2009, p. 24).

On January 28, 1920, the members of the Directory submitted their demands to the top leadership of the Czechoslovak SSR (Topinka, 2010, p. 57). In particular, G. Žatkovič wrote a letter to T. G. Masaryk, which was dated January 28, 1920, suggested abolishing the post of administrator and the Directory, and instead to appoint the Governor and Minister of Regional Affairs. The military dictatorship was also the subject to abolition right after the appointment of the Governor. At the same time, it was proposed to put off the elections to Parliament of the Czechoslovak Republic and the Seim in the region (Krempa, 1978, p. 732). The negotiations between G. Žatkovič and T. G. Masaryk carried on February 10, 1920. The course of negotiations proved that realization of the region’s autonomous rights was complicated by the position of individual politicians. Hence, the Minister of Internal Affairs of that time and a leader of the influential agrarian party A. Švehla did not support the introduction of autonomous rights of the region. According to Yu. Brashhajko’s recollections, this politician “imagined autonomy in such way that it would be enough that we would have the right to choose village elders” (Brashhajko, 2009, p. 26). Due to the lack of results, G. Žatkovič

resigned on March 3, 1920, supported by other members of the Directory (Expozé Dr. G. I. Žatkoviča, 1921, p. 32).

The Constitution of Czechoslovakia, dated February 29, 1920 declared Subcarpathian Rus an integral part of the Czechoslovak SSR, “the Ruthenians south of the Carpathians” received a guarantee of territorial autonomy. At the same time, the text of the Saint-Germain Treaty on Minorities of 1919 was not included verbatim in the basic law of the Czechoslovak SSR. In particular, the provision on the approval by the President of the Czechoslovak Republic of the laws adopted by the Seim was a deviation from the agreement, testifying to the desire to have a lever of influence on affairs in the region. The next modification was that the Seim could not determine the number of deputies and senators and the method of their election, could not send its representatives to the National Assembly. The Constitutional Court received the right to decide whether the laws, passed by the Seim were valid or invalid (Pop, 2010, pp. 307–308). At the same time, the Constitution guaranteed legal equality to all its citizens of the Czech Republic.

Yu. Bysaha, while analyzing the provisions of Items 2–9 § 3 of the Basic Law, which was related to the autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus, was taken aback and expressed his amusement that the issue concerning the state legal status of the autonomy was decided without the representatives of the region in the National Assembly of Czechoslovakia. At the same time, Yu. Bysaha asked a completely logical question: “Whether the National Assembly of the first republic was legally competent to determine the state legal place of the region within the Czechoslovak Republic”. The researcher considered that the representatives of the financial and political groups of Czechoslovakia were not satisfied with the fair solution of the national minorities’ issues. As a result, the “unconstitutional government order on zhupy (counties) administration on the territory of Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus” was implemented in the future instead of the idea of autonomy incorporated in the Constitution (Bysaga, 1997, p.72).

The negotiations between the President and G. Žatkovič went on later. The President suggested postponing the resolution of the territorial issue, which was to be done by Parliament of the Czechoslovak SSR and the diet of Subcarpathian Rus, agreed to the appointment of G. Zatkovic as the temporary Governor of the region (Expozé Dr. G. I. Žatkoviča, 1921, p. 32).

It should be noted that at that time Prague was consulting with the local officials concerning the development of the coat of arms of Subcarpathian Rus. Due to the law, issued on March 30, 1920, Parliament adopted the law on the state flag and emblem of the Czechoslovak Republic (Zbírka zákonů, 1920, pp. 539–540). The new coat of arms of Subcarpathian Rus became the part of the large and medium state emblem of the Czechoslovak Republic – a shield divided into two parts, on the right part there were three gold stripes on a blue field, on the left part there was a red figure of a bear standing on its hind legs with an open mouth on a silver field (Pop, 2006, p. 150).

The government order “On Amending the General Statute of Subcarpathian Rus”, issued on April 26, 1920 was a certain compromise between T. G. Masaryk and G. Žatkovič (Zbírka zákonů, 1920, p. 913). There were the following important differences in the autonomous organization of the region, compared to the Constitution, the creation of new authorities – the positions of the Vice-Governor and the Governor’s Council. The head of the region – the Governor – was appointed by the President of the Republic on the advice of the government. The Governor had significant powers, but could only carry out them with the support of the Vice-Governor, who was at the head of the local administrative apparatus. The Governor’s Council (10 people) received the right to adopt resolutions of the Civil Administration (Boldyzhar & Mosny, 2002, p. 90). According to Yo. Klimko, this document “marked the

beginning of the final rejection of the initial project of autonomy” (Klimko, 1986, p. 67). Due to the abolition of the “General Statute ...” of 1919, which allowed Prague authorities not to start the formation of the Diet within the period specified in the statute, i.e. not to hold elections to it 90 days after the general parliamentary elections (Pushkash, 2007, p. 92).

G. Žatkovič was appointed by T. G. Masaryk as temporary Governor, who considered it his task to “make a constitutional state out of Rusynia” on May 5, 1920 (*Spravoizdanije predsdatel’a*, 1919, p. 5).

The Czech P. Ehrenfeld was appointed to the position of Vice-Governor on May 1, 1920 (*Archiv Ústavu T. G. Masaryka*, 1923). According to the law of April 15, 1920 and Decree of July 27, 1920 (*Zbirka zákonů*, 1920, p. 599), the government was given the right to exercise greater control over the composition of civil servants in the region. The government sent the Czech civil servants to the region actively, where they made up approximately 38% (more than 3,3 thousand people) of the staff of the administrative apparatus in 1921 (*Československá statistika*, 1927, p. 134).

The ruling circles of Czechoslovakia were interested in centralized state management as a means of political stabilization under conditions of support for the irredentism of national minorities by neighbouring states. According to I. Pop, it was unrealistic to implement an autonomous system in the region right after its accession to the Czechoslovak SSR, under the conditions of destruction caused by war and foreign occupation, politically agitated by the communist dictatorship of 1919, with a complete lack of local qualified personnel (Pop, 1999, pp. 131–132).

It should be emphasized that there was a social stratification of the Ruthenian community at the initial stage, which was a peasant patriarchal society. There was no own aristocracy and entrepreneurs, intelligentsia, the role of which was performed by the Greek-Catholic clergy (Tóth, 1999, p. 129). There were 62,7% of the Ruthenians of the total population of Subcarpathian Rus, which numbered 608,108 people, (Kravchuk, 2008, p. 146). There were people employed in agriculture – 82,13%, 5.06% – in industry and crafts, 0,51% – in trade and finance, 1,39% – in transport, 1,47% – in state and other public services, 0,31% – in the army, 9,13% – in other spheres (*Československá statistika*, 1927, p. 132). It was about the absence of a large middle class in the Ruthenian community – the basis of self-governing actions in various spheres of life. The researcher E. Beneš noted the following: “Democracy gives its citizens new broad rights and responsibilities. In order for an ordinary citizen to be able to fulfill them in a modern complex society, he must be prepared for this.” (Benes, 1925, p. 77). S. Klochurak made the following remark: “Who exactly could we appoint in the 1919s – 20s, not only the administrative apparatus, but all other posts of various state regional, city and other institutions, without which one can not imagine the normal course of public life?”. He believed that the main reason for delaying the implementation of the autonomous rights of the region was the population’s ignorance, which numbered 80% and the absence of intelligentsia (Mushynka, 2011, p. 391). A. Voloshyn noted the following: “And without their own cultural and economic institutions, in his autonomous country a Rusyn would be a slave to someone else’s culture and someone else’s capital” (Voloshyn, 1935, p. 2).

At the same time, we should note that the political parties with autonomist programmes began to emerge in the region under the conditions of the democratic regime in the Czechoslovak SSR (Švorc, 1997, p. 59). First of all, among the Ruthenian political parties the following should be mentioned the Carpathian Labour Party, the Ruthenian Agricultural Party, and the Subcarpathian Agricultural Union (Pikovs’ka, 2020, pp. 127–128).

However, the government of the Czechoslovak Republic began to put off the most important

political demand of the region's political representatives – the introduction of autonomous rights. Although elections to Parliament of the Czechoslovak SSR were to be held no later than in July of 1920, they were not called, unlike in the Czech lands and Slovakia. There were reasons for this, which were objective in nature, they were based on the complexity of local linguistic, religious and economic relations, political instability, low cultural level of the population, lack of own intelligentsia and strong positions of the left-wing political forces (Vidnyanskyy, 2012, p. 294). A. Švehla considered it vital to establish branches of all-Czechoslovak parties in the region in the light of events (Brandejš, 1936, p. 74).

Interconnectedness of various components of the national issue (the Slovaks, the national minorities) played a role in delaying the introduction of autonomy, which contributed to the consolidation of a unitary state system in the Czech Republic. The top leadership of Czechoslovakia were afraid that the Hungarians, who were more organized than the Slovaks and the Ruthenians, in the event of the regional autonomous institutions establishment, would take the leading positions in them and proclaim the “return” of this region to Hungary. In particular, the author of the autonomy concept, E. Beneš, advocated its consistent implementation in the region, which was inhabited by two-thirds majority of the Slavic element against one-third of the Hungarian and the Jewish minorities (Benesh, 1934, pp. 35–36). The expediency of a long-term preparation was seen in the need to build “true democratic autonomy”, because due to a low level of education, the demagoguery of the “communist party”, the Hungarian minority could gain decisive influence in the Diet, which could “pave the way for undemocratic rule” (Benesh, 1934, pp. 36, 38). In addition, E. Beneš highlighted the following: “This contradicts the democratic principles on which our republic was built” (Benesh, 1934, p. 49). Local officials also realized this opportunity (Grendzha-Dons'kyj, 2003, p. 32).

It is absolutely essential to take into account the interconnectedness of internal and external factors while analysing the process of the Czechoslovak policy formation regarding autonomy. In the summer of 1920 the instability of domestic political situation in the region was intensified by the foreign political circumstances. Manifestations of irredentism increased among former Hungarian government officials (the delivery of firearms to the territory of the border was recorded (Vehesh, Gyrja & Korol', 1998, p. 54). Prague began to create the military and political alliance – the Little Entente, which consisted of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania in order to counter Hungarian revisionism, on August 14–17, 1920 (Olivová, 2000, p. 105).

In the summer-autumn of 1920, in connection with the offensive of the Soviet Russian troops in Galicia, the International Socialist Party of Subcarpathian Russia, anticipating the creation of a revolutionary situation, formed underground armed units numbering more than 8,850 people (Vidnyanskyy, 2000, p. 299; Prunycja, 1984, p. 41). It should be mentioned that on July 24, 1920, in a telegramme to V. Lenin, J. Stalin who was a representative of the Bolshevik leadership on the South-Western Front, offered to consider the issue of preparing uprisings in a number of countries, in particular, in the Czech Republic (Khlevnyuk, 2015, p. 95).

On August 9, 1920, the civil administration of Subcarpathian Rus informed the government of the Czechoslovak SSR about preparations by the local communists to establish control over Mukachevo-Lavochno road, where the military activity of the Russian Red Army was expected. There were also rumors about a coup in the region and Eastern Slovakia during the approach of the Soviet troops to Lviv and Stryi (Granchak & Prykhod'ko, 1999, p. 59).

Units of the Czechoslovak army arrived in the region, and in the second half of July of

1920, a state of emergency was introduced, and the number of law enforcement officers was increased (Olivová, 2000, p. 112). We should mention that later in the documents of the Communist Party of Ukraine it was noted: "... The uprising failed, many of the comrades were arrested by the Czech authorities ... Many comrades returned back, as the Czechs declared martial law in the entire Subcarpathian region now..." (Vidnyansky, 1994, p. 138).

In September and October of 1920 G. Žatkovič developed and submitted to the government drafts of the electoral law and constitution of Subcarpathian Rus under such conditions. He suggested holding the elections to the Diet in January of 1921 (Expozé Dr. G. I. Žatkoviča, 1921, p. 34). At that time, the political crisis in the Czechoslovak SSR was only growing, and it reached its peak during the general strike (in Subcarpathian Rus – December 14–21, 1920) (Pop, 2005, pp. 312–313), which was accompanied by an attempt to seize power by pro-communist forces. Under such conditions, the government of the Czechoslovak SSR was afraid of showing weakness. G. Žatkovič's projects remained unrealized. The draft Constitution of Subcarpathian Rus, which was prepared in the company of the Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak SSR, Ya. Cherny in October of 1920, provided for a centralized model of relations between Prague and the region (Kravchuk, 2008, p. 110). In response, G. Žatkovič resigned. The negotiations on the deputation of the political parties of the region in Prague (April of 1921) were useless. In May of 1921, the President accepted the resignation of G. Žatkovič (Lichtej 1995, p. 181).

In the future, T. G. Masaryk continued to ponder over the solution of the political crisis in Subcarpathian Rus. The President was afraid of the support of local autonomists by the Glinkivites (Krempa, 1978, p. 738). There were certain reasons for this. At the same time, the Slovak People's Party triggered the struggle for the autonomy of the native region, which was embodied in three relevant bills (Shnitser, 2008, pp. 54–56). It is notable that later the party developed one of its projects for the autonomy of Slovakia based on the model of the constitutional state legal status of Subcarpathian Rus (Shnitser, 2008, p. 90).

The President considered it crucial to consolidate local Ruthenian politicians around support for government policy. On May 24, 1921, he wrote down his thoughts on the drastic need to create an "agrarian-socialist coalition" on the basis of the parties of Subcarpathian Rus (Krempa, 1978, p. 738). On July 3, 1921, T. G. Masaryk wrote the following: "Dr. Žatkovič naturally understands autonomy in the sense of independence in his project. As an American, he is led to this by the American example: the federation of independent states ... In each case, we have to take into consideration the growing desire for independence, for autonomy in areas not defined by the peace treaty; but the peace treaty provides for the expansion of autonomy, and the Ruthenians in this sense will refer to the fact that they joined the state by their own decision and therefore will take political and legal benefits from it. That is: they will also see in autonomy an independent political and legal element – hence, the justification of a certain independence from the state" (Krempa, 1978, p. 737).

In general, in the 1920s, the leadership of Czechoslovakia strengthened the centralized administrative system (Vehesh, Vidnianskyi & Chavarha, 2022, p. 105). On August 26, 1921, the government approved a new territorial administrative division of the region into three zhupy (counties) with centres in Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, and Velykyi Sevlush (Narysy istoriyi Zakarpattia, 1995, p. 130). The territory of the Ruthenians in the Czechoslovak Republic remained administratively divided. If the territory of 17,945 sq. km. meters was to be included in the "Ruska Kraina" as the part of Hungary, then Subcarpathian Rus included only 12,617 sq. km., in particular Pryašivshchyna – remained under the jurisdiction of the Slovak administrative units (SATR, f. 29, d. 3, c. 595, p. 28). During the establishment of the border with Romania,

Czechoslovakia transferred to Romania the eastern part of Transcarpathia with the city of Sighetu Marmăției, and 14 villages on May 4 in 1921 (Zakarpat'tja, 2010, p. 55).

In 1919 – 1921 the steps taken by Czechoslovakia did not make the region a full-fledged autonomous unit of the republic. It should be mentioned that when referring to the legal status of Subcarpathian Rus, the employees of the Extraordinary Diplomatic Mission of the Ukrainian People's Republic in Prague considered it similar to the former crown lands in Cisleithania (CSASAG of Ukraine, f. 3519, d. 1, c. 4, p. 40). Only in October of 1938 the substantial realization of the autonomous rights of the region began (Vehesh, Vidnianskyi & Chavarha, 2022, p. 104).

The main efforts of the Czechoslovak government were directed to the development of economy and culture in the region. In particular, during his visit to Uzhhorod, T. G. Masaryk proclaimed the need to activate the local intelligentsia, cultural and economic upliftment of the population of the region, intensification of educational, educational and activities to improve the living conditions of the local population to the level of other regions of the Czechoslovak SSR as a prerequisite for granting autonomy of the region on September 22, 1921 (Masaryk, 2003, pp. 127 – 128). The government allocated certain financial investments for the development of Transcarpathia. Hence, according to the budget of 1920, revenues in the region were expected to be 21,529,000 kron, expenses – 58,685,865 kron, in 1921 – 232,8 million kron and 119,8 kron, respectively (Budzhet Karpats'koji (Ughors'koji) Ukrajinu, 1920, p. 2; Zbírka zákonů, 1920, p. 107). Subsequently, an employee of the Office of the President of the Czechoslovak SSR for Subcarpathian Rus, Ya. Necas, claimed that the Czech SSR allocated about 300 million kron in the budget for this region every year (Nečas, 1929, p. 450). In general, the necessary conditions for the development of this unique Ukrainian region were created in Czechoslovakia.

The Conclusion. Hence, the complex internal and external circumstances of the region's integration into the Czechoslovak Republic led to the development of a new administrative system under the conditions of the military dictatorship that lasted from 1919 to 1922. Autonomous regional institutions were not fully developed in the First Czechoslovak Republic. There was not even a comprehensive programme for a gradual introduction of autonomy by the authorities of the Czechoslovak Republic. The administrative system development was carried out under conditions of putting off the implementation of the constitutional provisions on autonomy. Despite the fact that there were objective reasons for this, due to the presence of the Czechoslovak Republic leadership's subjective views on the issue of autonomy as a possible factor of destabilization in a multinational country, and in particular, in Subcarpathian Rus, the disappointment of representatives of all political trends in the region resulted in the development of the autonomist movement, which became the centre of the region's political life during the interwar period.

The outlined issue requires further research. We consider it relevant to highlight specific measures of central and local authorities in the field of establishing the activities of various state institutions in the region in 1919 – 1939, law enforcement structures, etc. A separate objective of scholars should be the preparation of documentary publications on the specified issues.

Acknowledgement. The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to all members of the editorial board of the bulletin for the consultations provided during the preparation of the article for publishing.

Funding. The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

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The article was received April 17, 2022.

Article recommended for publishing 23/11/2022.