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THE COMMUNICATION DIMENSION OF ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

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КОММУНИКАТИВНОЕ ИЗМЕРЕНИЕ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ ПУБЛИЧНЫХ ИНСТИТУТОВ В ЦИФРОВОЙ СРЕДЕ

Summary. The analysis and assessment of the current state of implementation of public communicative interaction in the digital environment in Vinnytsia region is carried out. The ways of improving public digital communicative practices are substantiated. In particular, it is proved that the changes caused by digitalization significantly affect the communication process in public management. Communication practices in the modern world depend almost entirely on the digital component, which makes it necessary for the state and public authorities to implement digital tools. The communication dimension of the activity of public institutions of Vinnytsia region in the digital environment is carried out. The necessity for improvement of digital communicative interaction by public authorities of Vinnytsia region is proved. The aspects of modernization of communication activities in the digital environment of Vinnytsia regional community are substantiated with the indication of concrete advantages of using the newest technologies of digital communications.

Аннотация. В работе проведены анализ и оценка современного состояния реализации публичной коммуникативного взаимодействия в цифровой среде в Винницком регионе. Проведено обоснование путей совершенствования публичных цифровых коммуникативных практик. В частности, доказано, что изменения, вызванные цифровизацией, существенно влияют и на коммуникативный процесс в публичном управлении. Коммуникативные практики в современном мире почти полностью зависят от цифровой составляющей, которая требует внедрения государством и органами публичной власти цифровых инструментов. Осуществлен коммуникационное измерение деятельности публичных институтов Винницкого региона в цифровой среде. Доказана необходимость усовершенствования цифровой коммуникативного взаимодействия органами публичной власти Винницкой области. Обоснованы направления модернизации коммуникативной деятельности в цифровой среде Винницкой региональной общины с указания конкретные преимуществ использования новейших технологий цифровых коммуникаций.

Key words: communication, digital communicative interaction, digital transformation, digitalization, digital technologies, digital communications, regional level, local level, digital environment, public communicative practices, improvement.

Ключевые слова: глобализация, цифровая трансформация, цифровизация, цифровая экономика, цифровые технологии, киберпреступность, кибербезопасность, моделирование.

Introduction. The relevance of the research is determined by the modern era of mass communications and digital technologies which has for ever changed the vector of civilizational development of mankind, its scientific and technological progress, culture of communicative interaction. Today, political and sectoral discourses are specified by digital communications: from the simple statement of fact by tools of digital technologies to digital globalization in communicative interaction.

Digital technologies and numerous media communications they produce have formed a new generation of mass information – digital communications. Digital communications not only perform informational and communicative functions, but also have led to the emergence of new practices, spheres of activity, professions and cultural phenomena. Therefore, the development and implementation of digital communications to ensure effective interaction of all segments and structures of society, including public ones, is an urgent task of sustainable socio-economic growth.

Literature review. Theoretical framework of public communicative interaction in the aspect of digitalization and formation of digital governance are developed and outlined in scientific works of O.Bukhtatyi [1], Zh.Denysiuk [5], O.Karpenko [5], V.Kuibida [7, 5], I.Nikolina [9], Sarah Maria Lysdal Krøtel [10], N.Frolova [3] and others.

However, we believe that the issue of measuring communicative interaction in the digital environment needs further research.

Purpose. The aim of the study is to determine the peculiarities of public communicative interaction in the digital environment in Vinnytsia region and to substantiate the ways to improve it.

The aim presupposes the completion of a number of certain tasks, namely:

- 1) to determine the theoretical and legal fundamentals of the implementation of communicative activities in the digital environment;
- 2) to carry out the communication dimension of activities of public institutions of Vinnytsia region in the digital environment;
- 3) to suggest ways to improve public communicative practices of the digital environment at the regional and local levels.

Results. More and more spheres of human existence are being rapidly transformed and transferred into the communicative space of the World Wide Web. Communication processes in the modern world almost entirely depend on the digital component, which makes it necessary for the state and public authorities to implement digital tools of communication and interaction. These tools will stimulate the development of information openness of public authorities and society as one of the key factors of democracy development in Ukraine, as well as the direct growth of life quality of every citizen.

The latest communications are significantly changing social relations – digital society, dependent on digital technologies, is being formed: a transition

from systems and processes of postindustrial economy and information society to digital economy and digital society is taking place.

The concept of “digital economy” is a relatively new and extremely important phenomenon. Digital economy is based on digital technologies where digital data and network transactions are key factors and means of production. S.Kolyadenko notes that it already influences traditional economy transforming it from one that consumes resources to one that creates resources [6].

The process of transforming economy into digital one is called digitalization. Digitalization is a process of implementing modern digital technologies in various spheres of life and production which, in fact, makes integral interaction of virtual and physical spaces possible [5].

In his monograph “Digital Modernization of the Ukrainian Economy as an Opportunity for Breakthrough Development” V.Lyashenko substantiated that with a system state approach the implementation of digital technologies will stimulate the development of an open information society as one of the key factors of democracy development in Ukraine, economic growth, improvement of productivity, as well as life quality of the citizens [8].

All over the world, the concept of “new public management” has been replaced by the era of digital governance which implies more modern management with an emphasis on client-orientation and digitalization [9].

It should be noted that conditions for digitalization at the state level are being created in Ukraine: government institutions are being created, laws, regulations and orders are being adopted to improve this process. One of the main regulatory documents is the order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine «On approval of the Concept of development of digital economy and society of Ukraine for 2018-2020» [2].

We share the point of view of scientists from the National Academy for Public Administration under the President of Ukraine who note that digitalization of public governance is a process of introducing digital transformations in the public field, and emphasize that it will lead to an abrupt transition through the use of digital technologies [7].

These technologies and consequential changes will significantly influence the communication process in public management.

Communication activities in public management consist in the implementation of information exchanges aimed at performing the functions of public management. The essential communication subsystem of public management includes the subjects of interaction, information connections and management relations, processes of interaction of management entities between each other and with other public institutions. It also includes the infrastructure that provides the creation, transmission, search and retrieval of management information, i.e. information that is provided in this system and used to implement management interactions and influences.

Thus, public management cannot exist without communication as a form of interaction between various subjects and objects of management because the democratic regime requires the coordination of positions in a constant dialogue between authorities and society. Due to the communication process the state body establishes close ties with citizens bringing them closer to the process of making state decisions and initiating a dialogue that makes it possible to understand the citizens' needs and requests [1].

Although Ukraine uses digital technologies in public management, it is necessary to implement digital communications more actively in order to obtain the status of open public authority.

Digital communicative interaction is an electronic transmission of text data, images, video, voice and other information including messages or publications that are transmitted in the digital space via electronic mail, videos, live video broadcasts, digital events, podcasts, blog posts, mobile apps, announcements, forums, web pages, as well as any social networks or messaging platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, WeChat, Line, LinkedIn, WhatsApp or Snapchat. Digital technologies include both the ways of posting information – sites, blogging platforms, social network services, groups in messengers, channels in programs for corporate communication and the ways of their further distribution – cloud services, aggregators, and analytical programs using artificial intellect.

In the EU countries, according to the EPACE project study (Exchanging good practices for the promotion of an active citizenship in the EU), electronic consultations, electronic discussions and webcasts of debates and meetings of collegial bodies, etc. are most often used in the communication process.

Sarah Maria Lysdal Krøtel, a researcher of digital communication in the field of public management, notes its positive as well as negative sides. She substantiates, based on the empiric research, that information received digitally is less important for citizens than information obtained the traditional way [10].

Communication activities in public management in Ukraine are regulated by a large array of legislative and regulatory acts. It is expedient to single out the laws regulating the implementation of communication activities with the use of digital technologies: "On electronic documents and electronic document management" and "On electronic trust services".

Legal regulation of communicative activities in the digital environment in public management is reflected in a number of regulatory acts of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine: orders "Some issues of public administration reform of Ukraine" dated June, 24, 2016 №474-p, "On approval of the Concept of development of electronic services system of Ukraine" dated November, 16, 2016 №918-p, "On approval of the Concept of e-government development in Ukraine" dated September 20, 2017 № 649-p, "On approval of the action plan for the implementation of the Concept of electronic system development in Ukraine for 2017-

2018" dated June 14, 2017 №394-p and "On approval of the Concept of development of the digital economy and society of Ukraine for 2018-2020 and approval of the action plan for its implementation" dated January 17, 2018 № 67-p; resolutions "On approval of the Regulation on data sets to be released in the form of open data" dated October 21, 2015 № 835, "Some issues of electronic interaction of state electronic information resources" dated September 8, 2016 № 606. The resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "Some issues of digital development" dated January 30, 2019 № 56 made an important step towards the adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to digitalization processes: it provides for the implementation of the principle of "Digital by Default". Currently, only a small percentage of all regulatory acts in the country contain the norm according to which the process described in the document can be implemented digitally.

The communication dimension of activities of public institutions of Vinnytsia region in the digital environment is carried out on the basis of the analysis of digital communication resources of Vinnytsia Regional State Administration (VRSA) and Vinnytsia City Amalgamated Territorial Community (VCATC).

Vinnytsia local government bodies are increasing the use of digital technologies for an effective communication process and remain the standard of digital governance for the rest of territorial communities of Vinnytsia region.

The official website of Vinnytsia City Council (<http://www.vin.gov.ua>) performs the function of informing (online access to City Council documents: decisions, orders and, importantly, draft decisions). It also has elements of feedback – it's possible to make an appointment to heads of departments and services of Vinnytsia City Council via "My Account" on the site and to leave an electronic appeal to them (<https://www.vmr.gov.ua/Lists/Officials/Default.aspx>)

The e-petition service (<https://petition.e-dem.ua/vinnytsia>) is an effective communication tool in Vinnytsia. On November 9, 2020, a resident of Vinnytsia used it offering to join the Waze for Cities navigation service which makes it possible to report problems on the roads and make the users' lives more convenient. Accordingly, the city can also inform about road works, street closures and other issues. On receiving the required number of votes, the petition was supported by the local authorities, and already in December the City Council informed that the application for joining this service was submitted and organizational and technical work on its implementation began.

Also, on the site of the city administration citizens have access to the "Budget of Public Initiatives" which gives everybody an opportunity to put forward a socially useful idea and a chance to receive a grant for its implementation. Voting in electronic form takes place through the "Public Budget" service with the use of identification via BankID or a qualified electronic signature. In particular, due to the project "Budget for School Projects" Vinnytsia took first place in the world

having won the international prize “Child Friendly Cities Inspire Awards” and having become one of the most child friendly cities in the world according to UNICEF. This project of school participation budget brought Vinnytsia its victory and became the world's best example of engaging children in urban governance.

Online surveys of residents (<http://www.vmr.gov.ua/default.aspx>) concerning topical issues of entrepreneurship, branding, transport, participation budget etc. are conducted on the website of Vinnytsia City Council.

Specialists of the operational response unit “Round-the-Clock Guard” (“Tsilodobova Varta”) (<http://1560.vmr.gov.ua/default.aspx>), which was created in Vinnytsia, accept citizens' appeals on all issues of municipal services, health care, education and transport via telephone connection and online chat. In 2019, more than 4,000 online consultations were provided. “Round-the-Clock Guard” also processes information from the Internet resource “Map of Appeals of Vinnytsia Citizens” (<https://map.vmr.gov.ua>).

A convenient digital tool that ensures the effective implementation of communicative interaction is the “Informer for Citizens” service (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.vinnitsya.informer>; [https://t.me / VinInformerBot](https://t.me/VinInformerBot)), realized in a mobile application on the iOS and Android platforms, in messengers. The mobile application “Informer for Citizens” is a service that informs about future events on selected topics, interesting events, planned and emergency shutdowns, provides opportunities for communication with “Round-the-Clock Guard” and appeals through the “Map of Appeals of Vinnytsia Citizens”. Vinnytsia City Council organizes events to promote and improve it within the “Informer for citizens” project.

In order to establish an effective communication process and develop digital democracy, the Concept of Digital Participation of Vinnytsia City Amalgamated Territorial Community for 2019-2025 was developed which aims to create a model for attracting citizens to decision-making processes with the help of digital opportunities through a common problem search, informing, identifying solutions and their further implementation. The main idea of the Concept of Digital Participation is as follows: “smart city with smart citizens” where residents form a vision of their city future through e-tools [11]. The implementation of the Concept is aimed at the implementation of digital services for interaction with various stakeholders (creation of new useful resources, tools and opportunities, the latest services and programs for need satisfaction and interaction with citizens, taking into account the principles of inclusiveness). It is also about the use of elements of artificial intelligence and open data in e-participation tools, modernization and development of existing instruments of socio-political inclusion.

The results of recent research which also evaluates the aspects of communication activities in the digital

environment [12] show as well that this community can be considered exemplary not only in Vinnytsia region, but throughout Ukraine.

The tools of digital communicative interaction used by VRSA include: its official website, public pages on Facebook and Twitter social networks, channel on YouTube video hosting, groups in messengers, channels in programs for corporate communication and web conferencing. Here is the detailed description of each of them.

One of the most important digital communication tools of VRSA is the official website (<http://www.vin.gov.ua/>) which serves as a source of information. It is the website that creates the basis for open, transparent and reliable informing of citizens on the authority's activities. The homepage presents integrated information and provides basic guidance both in the system of information resources of the administration and in connections and links (links to other resources) to domestic resources. It contains a site map and a list of main homepages, information about the regional state administration, its staff and official address, the structure of RSA, staff changes, regulatory documents governing the regional state administration in its activities, announcements, news, information about the region's economy development, financial state, socio-humanitarian sphere, population, society, service catalogue and more.

Some elements of interactivity are also available on the site (for example, the option of asking questions and receiving answers via e-mail or getting samples of some certificates and forms). An important communication element of the site is the system of electronic appeals, citizens can submit electronic appeals using the Internet and means of electronic communication after registration on the site, the answer is sent by e-mail and posted on the site in the section “My Appeals”. The target audience of the site is an active part of the community, namely: politicians, activists, journalists and managers. It is these categories of people who will use the information from the site the most.

The next digital communication tools of VRSA are its Facebook (<https://goo.su/3Bt1>) and Twitter (<https://goo.su/3bT2>) pages and YouTube channel (<https://goo.su/3BT2>).

The use of social networks is aimed at solving several tasks: creation of a positive image of the public authority; publicity, transparency and openness of its work; establishing of direct and operational communication with citizens; dissemination of information about the activities of the public authority, clarification of the implemented policy.

After a detailed analysis of the VRSA page on Facebook, we can conclude that the page is mostly used to inform the audience, not all opportunities of encouraging feedback are realised (surveys, voting), responses to comments and personal messages are missing. The main advantages of social networks as a means of communication between the government and citizens, such as the opportunity to track the community's reaction to the actions of public

authorities concerning the comments under publications, to conduct surveys on important socio-political and other relevant topics, to collect statistics, are not used. Users' activity rates are quite low – 14,291 network users follow the page, while the number of "likes" or reposts of publications does not exceed 30, the percentage of active users is 0.21%.

The YouTube channel is used to publish video files of meetings, briefings, videos with socio-cultural content. This tool is also used exclusively to inform the audience about the activities of the authority and is characterized by low user activity - the channel was created on April 6, 2015, has 102 subscribers, 72 videos are published there, the total number of views on the channel as of 20.12.2020 is 27,434.

"Messengers" are an equally important tool for digital communication with the public. They are becoming more and more widespread due to their advantages: unobtrusiveness, asynchrony, confidentiality, cheapness, and the option of attaching photos or videos. Messengers are the fastest way to inform residents. Vinnytsia Regional State Administration actively uses the channel in Telegram Messenger (<https://t.me/VinnytsiaODA>) to promptly send information about the work of the authority, about current events taking place in the region, Ukraine and the world. On September 2, 2020 Vinnytsia Regional State Administration launched a Telegram bot (https://t.me/vin_oda_bot) to promptly answer questions addressed to the regional authorities. The program has the functions of prompts and search, redirects the user to appropriate departments, which makes information more accessible to people, as well as considerably simplifies the system of citizens' appeals. In summary, we can say that the Telegram channel and Telegram bot are a very effective way of communication with citizens.

The analysis of the use of digital technologies of communicative interaction by public authorities at the regional and local levels encourages the identification of specific aspects of modernization of communication practices of the digital environment.

Problematic issues of the digital communication process include lack of coordination in the work of public relations services with the public of the regional territorial community; also the feedback from the audience is not always effective, i.e. it is not flexible and efficient enough. VRSA as a state institution does not always make good use of available communication resources and loses the opportunity of effective communication with its target audience on the Internet.

Therefore, first of all, the "information" paradigm which is now the basis of "communication" between the government and the regional community should be changed to "communicative" as an inevitable result of participatory democracy. One of the main directions of improving communication activities in the World Wide Web should be active introduction and use of digital participation technologies by regional authorities [4].

VRSA uses the website and social networks not efficiently enough, in particular, the functioning of feedback forms on the website of the authority needs to

be improved, the existing system of electronic appeals on the site works in test mode, there are significant problems with access to public information in the form of open data. Although the number and variety of information messages of the authority are significant in volume, they are not always complete, consistent, timely and adapted to the needs of consumers of information services.

Here are some possible lines of further development of the use of these ways of communicative interaction by regional authorities which will be of benefit at the local level as well.

First, analytical materials concerning the functioning of Vinnytsia region will be perceived better if presented in the form of graphs, infographics and diagrams, they will also facilitate the ability of content users to easily compare the dynamics. Using bright and concise infographics that can be disseminated on social networks, public authorities of Vinnytsia region will be able to convey important analytical information about their work without mass media being involved.

Second, it is urgent to improve the system of electronic appeals on the VRSA website, surveys popularization, responses to comments and personal messages of users on the public authority's Facebook page. It would be appropriate to create a regional automated system for monitoring digital communications in all communities of the region, for instance, such programs as "Recording of decisions and orders of the regional community", "Recording of appeals of citizens of the regional community."

Third, due to peculiarities of the visual perception of information, it is theoretically possible to launch short informational and educational videos for citizens on acute issues concerning the life in Vinnytsia region. Public authorities can also perform educational functions through social networks. Visualized materials and video content will be in great demand among the target audience.

Another way to improve the communication process in the digital environment is to create integrated communication platforms of public authorities. It is necessary to create a single communication platform of Vinnytsia region which would simultaneously realize the opportunities of citizens of each community to both receive and participate in the creation of public information.

Mobile communication interaction is one of the aspects of developing communication with the public which has a significant potential in the context of increasing the efficiency of service delivery and is most dynamically developing. However, "mobile government" technologies are not widely used by public authorities of Vinnytsia region. Monitoring of most official websites of executive and local governments showed that there is no mobile version of their websites.

We offer several possible ways to improve digital public communication for VCATC and other communities of Vinnytsia region:

- popularization of digital democracy tools and creation of conditions for cooperation in the format “community – authorities – business – mass media”;

- implementation of experience of the best national and foreign practices for increasing the level of conscious and responsible participation of residents in the digital ecosystem of the community;

- participation in thematic international and national grant programs and competitions together with civil society institutions in order to develop and implement innovative technologies of digital participation;

- formation of digital participation skills, digital competencies for the use of digital communication tools by the community’s residents, including children;

- integration of adjacent territorial communities into the digital communications system;

- holding hackathons and technology days in order to determine the demand and generate ideas for products and systems of digital participation of residents in making management decisions;

- research of current trends and formation of demand for digital communication practices;

- use of elements of artificial intelligence and open data in digital communications;

- implementation of principles of inclusivity in the communication process on the Web;

- monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of using digital communications.

All the considered tools and ways of modernization of communication activities of public administration bodies at the regional and local levels are connected with the formation and development of digital governance, conditioned by the development of digital society and future-oriented.

Conclusions. The theoretical and legal bases of communicative activities of public authorities in the digital environment are investigated.

The influence of digitalization on public management and its transformation into digital governance by means of the latest digital technologies is considered. It is proved that the changes caused by digitalization significantly affect the communication process in public management. Communication processes in the modern world almost entirely depend on the digital component, which makes it necessary for digital tools of communication and interaction to be implemented by the state and public authorities.

The communication measuring of activities of public institutions of Vinnytsia region in the digital environment is carried out on the basis of the analysis of digital communications of VRSA and VCATC.

On the basis of the analysis it is noted that Vinnytsia City Amalgamated Territorial Community is a model not only in Vinnytsia region, but also throughout Ukraine in terms of various practices of communication activities in the digital environment.

It is substantiated why it is necessary to improve the communication process by public authorities of Vinnytsia region with modern tools of digital communications for increasing the effectiveness of informing the society about the activities of public

authorities, for policy clarification, for providing citizens with access to public information and for establishing effective feedback.

It is proposed to change the “information” paradigm which is now the basis of “communication” between some government institutions and regional community for the “communicative” one as a result of the formation of participatory democracy.

The aspects of modernization of communication activities in the digital environment of Vinnytsia regional community are substantiated with the indication of concrete advantages of using the latest technologies of digital communications.

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