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Strategic public policy providers in the context of european integration

Провайдери стратегічної державної політики в контексті європейської інтеграції

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Abstract

The media system, public and volunteer organizations are a powerful “weapon” under martial law, which protects the people and the Armed Forces of Ukraine from the influence of Russian propaganda and misinformation in the course of informational and psychological warfare. The war and European integration processes cause a number of changes in the activities of public policy providers. In this regard, the aim of the article is to study the transformation of activity of public policy providers under martial law and European integration, as well as their impact on social processes. The main methods of the article are doctrinal approach and statistical methods. The conducted research established that “social provider” is an apt brand of a modern socially beneficial public organization. The important role of the changes made to the existing legislation regarding public policy providers after the full-scale invasion was noted, especially in the context of the harmonization of the national legal framework with the EU legal

Анотація

Система ЗМІ, громадські та волонтерські організації є потужною «зброєю» в умовах воєнного стану, яка захищає народ і Збройні Сили України від впливу російської пропаганди та дезінформації в ході інформаційно-психологічної війни. Війна та євроінтеграційні процеси викликають низку змін у діяльності провайдерів державної політики. У зв'язку з цим метою статті є дослідження трансформації діяльності суб'єктів публічної політики в умовах воєнного стану та євроінтеграції, а також їх впливу на суспільні процеси. Основними методами статті є доктринальний підхід та статистичні методи. Проведене дослідження встановило, що влучним брандом сучасної суспільно корисної громадської організації є «соціальний провайдер». Було відзначено важливу роль змін, внесених до чинного законодавства щодо виконавців публічної політики після повномасштабного вторгнення, особливо в контексті гармонізації національної правової

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framework. Some indicators of the consumption of mass information were analysed. The further research may focus on an in-depth analysis of the influence of manipulations on public views using the example of one of the leading online media channels.

Keywords: public policy providers, mass media, public organizations, martial law, European integration, propaganda.

Introduction

The powerful influence of the media system — public policy providers, public and volunteer organizations — on the level of public awareness, public sentiment and the level of trust in the country's defence during the war cannot be underestimated. The main tasks of public policy providers are to deliver current information about important events to the population, without violating the security of Ukraine's national interests, exerting influence on state authorities, in particular with the aim of observing and ensuring public interests, conducting campaigns to improve media literacy for the population, etc. There is no doubts that journalistic standards and the work of public organizations during the war undergo changes and are influenced by the requirements imposed by wartime. Besides, their activities are significantly influenced by European integration processes (Sologoub, 2022), corresponding changes in the legislative framework (Shmalenko & Matvienkiv, 2022), as well as the global trend towards digital transformation (Yoo & Yi, 2022; Gomez-Trujillo & Gonzalez-Perez, 2022; Yuan et al., 2023), leading to the transition of many public policy providers to the online environment. The important role of public policy providers in the life of the population in combination with modern transformational processes determines the high relevance of the issue under research.

Moreover, the role of public policy providers is not reduced to delivering certain information to the public and interacting with government agencies. Along with the invasion of the sovereign territory of Ukraine, the aggressor conducts an informational and psychological war against the state (Kalynovska, 2022; Dunayeva, 2022; Oleinik, 2023; Gryshchenko et al., 2021). Therefore, one of the main tasks of public policy providers is to counter manipulation and propaganda.

So, the aim of the article is to study the transformation of the activity of public policy providers under martial law and in the context of

бази з правовою базою ЄС. Проаналізовано деякі показники споживання масової інформації. Подальші дослідження можуть бути спрямовані на поглиблений аналіз впливу маніпуляцій на суспільні погляди на прикладі одного з провідних онлайн-медіа.

Ключові слова: провайдери публічної політики, ЗМІ, громадські організації, воєнний стан, євроінтеграція, пропаганда.

European integration, and their impact on social processes. The aim involved the fulfilment of the following research objectives:

- Provide the definition of public policy providers and strategic public policy providers and determine their goals;
- Study the current legislation and changes in the legislative framework regarding the activities of public policy providers, in particular mass media and public organizations, in the context of military operations and European integration processes;
- Analyse indicators of media consumption by the population of Ukraine, in particular, assess the level of trust in social institutions, satisfaction with the information received, as well as the level of media literacy of the population, and determine the main sources of information.

According to the tasks set in the article, the main research questions of the work should be defined as follows:

- Which organizations act as public policy providers, what are their goals, and which are the leading providers of public policy operating in Ukraine?
- What laws govern public policy providers, and how have they changed since the full-scale invasion?
- How can the impact and effectiveness of public policy providers be assessed, and what key indicators can be used in such an assessment?

Literature Review

Certain aspects of public policy coverage as a special sphere of interaction and dialogue between the authorities and civil society are a relevant topic for Ukrainian and foreign researchers. Kurgat and Jerop (2023) study the impact of mass media as key providers of public

policy on society. The researchers note the significant influence of mass media on citizens, as the latter need relevant and current information. In their study, the researchers present several views on the relationship between mass media and citizens. Soroka and Wlezien (2019) deal with the public policy coverage by mass media. The researchers rightly point out that citizens often do not directly feel the government's policy, learning about its decisions through the media. Therefore, the way the mass media covers information affects both public opinion and politics itself.

Many studies deal with the changing influence of public policy providers on the state and society in the era of digital transformation. The importance of this issue is determined by the threats generated by the Internet sphere, which influence the formation of public opinion and are actually beyond control. The work of Habermas (2022) is worth noting among the studies on the mutual influence of mass media and digitalization. Studying the structural transformation of the political and public sphere, the researchers reveal the impact of digitalization on mass media, which consists in reducing the role of classic mass media, displacing newspaper and magazine publishing, as well as in the emergence of a number of certain threats to the traditional role of the public sphere. Baum and Potter (2019) deal with the aspects of media, public opinion, and foreign policy in the age of social media. Researchers established that the advent of the Internet caused fundamental changes in mass media and politics. One of the consequences of such changes is the disposition of voters to reflexive and long-term support for the elected leaders and disapproval of the opposition. McGregor (2019) examines how journalists use social media to represent public opinion. The researchers established that social media, on the one hand, expand the idea of public opinion, while representing a more fragmented sense of the public on the other hand.

Important achievements of researchers taken into account in this article are studies on the spread of misinformation and propaganda in the information sphere, and countering it by social providers. Konstankevych et al. (2022) examine the issue of media manipulation as a means of information warfare. In their work, scientists reveal typological signs, linguistic markers and methods of fact checking. The researchers note that these communication technologies are used not only for propaganda, but for the Russian "war of meanings" against Ukraine. Arroyave and Romero-Moreno (2022) study the impact of

misinformation spread through digital media (social networks) on the course of the conflict in Colombia. The researchers established the significant role of propaganda and manipulation through Twitter, which contributed to the rejection of the peace agreement. Schmitt (2021) considered the attitude of the public in the EU to relations between the EU and China, India, and the Russian Federation. In general, the work focuses on the influence of Twitter on the public opinion and EU foreign affairs, as well as the attitude of the population of EU countries to pro-Russian propaganda.

Some studies cover the importance of public organizations as one of the main providers of public policy. Vozniuk (2021) examines the role of public organizations in protecting the information space of Ukraine. The study focuses on countering cyberattacks, but other measures of public associations' struggle against the aggressor are also noted. Some works are focused on shortcomings in the interaction of public organizations and the state. Thus, Prykhodko and Dokalenko (2020) study the role of interaction between public authorities and civil society institutions in Ukraine. The researchers established a number of problems in the mechanism of their interaction. Among other things, the researchers note that the public organizations are insufficiently effective, and sometimes hinder the normal functioning of the government.

This study takes into account the work of researchers on the influence of public policy providers on society and the state. In particular, the following areas are distinguished: identification of the most influential public policy providers for the public opinion, legislative support for their activities, as well as the study of indicators of information consumption in terms of digitalization.

Methods and Materials

Research design

As follows from the aim of the article, the research is based on the analysis of the activity and the influence of public policy providers on socio-political processes. For this purpose, the first stage of the research provided for the definition of public policy providers (or social providers), as well as strategic public policy providers at using general scientific research methods, in particular methods of analysis, synthesis, classification. The list of the most influential (strategic) public policy providers was

determined and classified into three main categories: public organizations, television channels, and Internet sources.

The second stage of the research involved the study of the current legislation of Ukraine related to the activities of public policy providers using the doctrinal approach. The main provisions of the legislative acts adopted after the large-scale invasion, as well as related to the need to harmonize the legal framework with European standards and norms were studied.

The third stage provided for determining the influence of public policy providers on the public opinion by researching individual indicators of media consumption. The analysis took into account the level of trust of the population in social institutions, the level of satisfaction with the information provided, the level of media literacy of the population, and also the main sources citizens receive information from. At this stage, statistical analysis of the results of two publicly available surveys was applied. The first survey (Omnibus) is designed to study the dynamics of trust in social institutions in 2021-2022 (Figure 2). The survey was conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) using computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) based on a sample of random mobile phone numbers. The survey involved a total of 995 adult (over 18 years old) respondents who live in all regions of Ukraine, except Crimea and territories that were not under the control of Ukraine before the beginning of the invasion. The sample did not include citizens who left the territory of the country after the invasion (February 24, 2022). The second survey — Ukrainian Media, Attitude and Trust in 2022 — (Figures 3-5) was carried out by InMind on behalf of the international organization Internews and was conducted at home. The survey involved 3,200 respondents living in cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants (USAID-Internews, 2022).

Information background

The information background of the research is academic periodicals of Ukraine and other countries, the results of public surveys Dynamics of Trust in Social Institutions in 2021-2022 and Ukrainian Media, Attitude and Trust in 2022 (USAID-Internews, 2022), as well as laws of Ukraine and other regulatory acts. They include, in particular Law of Ukraine “On Public Associations”, Law of Ukraine “On State Support of Mass Media and Social Protection of Journalists”, Law of Ukraine “On Information”, Law of Ukraine “On Media”, Law of Ukraine

“On National Security of Ukraine”, Decision of the Council of National Security and Defence of Ukraine “On Information Security Strategy”, Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On approval of the Strategy for Communication of the European Integration of Ukraine 2026” (Law 4572-VI, 2013; Law 2469-VIII, 2018; Decision n0080525-21, 2021; Order 1155-2022-p, 2022; Law 2657-XII, 2023; Law 2849-IX, 2023).

Results

The essence, purpose and main representatives of strategic public policy providers

Which organizations act as public policy providers, what are their goals, and which are the leading providers of public policy operating in Ukraine?

The phrase “social provider” or “strategic public policy provider used in the article is an apt brand of a modern socially beneficial public organization whose activities are aimed at providing individual (individual citizens) and group (amalgamated territorial communities) social services. The term comes from the English noun “provider”. So, a social provider is a public socially beneficial organization, which is a provider of any social services.

The main social providers are mass media (mass media), public and volunteer organizations — that is, everyone who influences the sentiments of society, in particular through the distribution of news and other socially important information. Accordingly, the main goal of public policy providers under martial law is to provide and cover relevant reliable information for the population, while avoiding damage to Ukraine’s strategic plans on the way to full independence of its territories and the course of the war. When positioning themselves as a social provider, public organizations assume certain ethical and professional responsibilities and must adhere to the classic democratic criteria of public management relations. Among other things, this implies that such organizations must work legally, act publicly, and be open to society and the state. In such a case, the public organization ensures its constitutional status as a public institution independent of the state, created by citizens to realize their interests and ensure democratic rights and freedoms.

Given that a social provider can be any organization or media, it is advisable to reveal the meaning of the concept “strategic public policy

providers” in more detail. The term “strategic” indicates a higher impact and scale of audience coverage by such providers. Strategic public policy providers are a kind of a “bridge” between the state and the population. Their purpose of a long-term communication between all social institutions. Such providers should have an appropriate reputation, an established audience, as well as a clearly defined goal. In the author’s opinion, it should primarily take into account the

country’s national interests. Figure 1 presents some of the most influential strategic providers.

Formulation of the definition, purpose and list of the most influential strategic public policy providers of Ukraine is the basis for further research. The activities of strategic public policy providers undergo significant changes in the context of war and European integration, so it is first of all advisable to examine the current legislation that enshrines such changes.

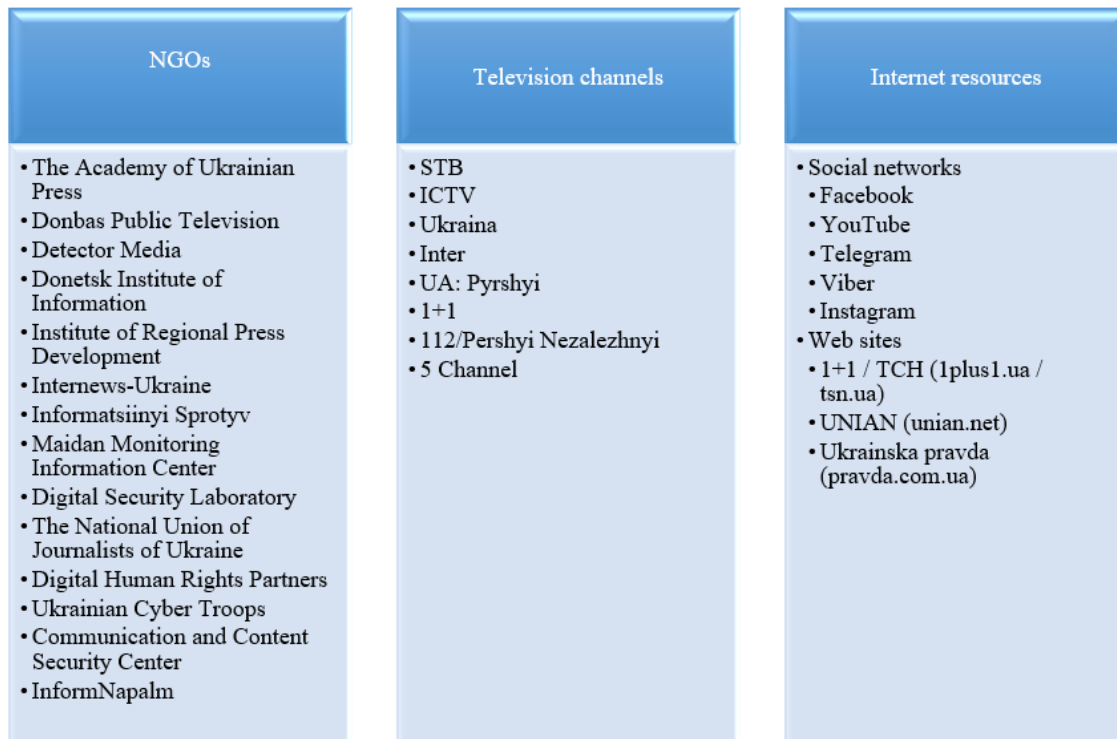


Figure 1. The main strategic providers of public policy in Ukraine (Vozniuk, 2021; Detector Media, 2022; Holitsyn & Frolova, 2023)

The legislative framework for the activities of public policy providers in the context of ensuring information security and countering propaganda in context of war and European integration

What laws govern public policy providers, and how have they changed since the full-scale invasion?

Ensuring transparent and legal activities of non-government organizations (NGOS) requires appropriate regulation by the state. The legal framework of Ukraine includes a number of laws and other acts that are directly or indirectly related to the activities of mass media, public organizations, as well as ensuring information security and countering propaganda. Given that the issue under research comprises a large number of regulatory legal acts, it is appropriate to consider the main ones (Figure 2).

The legal framework for the activities of mass media, NGOs, as well as ensuring information security and countering propaganda	Law of Ukraine "On Information" of 2 October 1992
	Law of Ukraine "On State Support of Mass Media and Social Protection of Journalists" of 23 September 1997.
	Law of Ukraine "On Public Associations" of 2013
	Law of Ukraine "On National Security of Ukraine" of 21 June 2018
	Decree of the President of Ukraine on the Decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of 15 October 2021 "On Information Security Strategy"
	Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On the Approval of the Communication Strategy on European Integration of Ukraine 2026", 2022
	Law of Ukraine "On Media" of 2023

Figure 2. Legal framework regarding media, ensuring information security, access to information and other related fields

The Law of Ukraine “On National Security” (Law 2469-VIII, 2018) states that the national security and defence policy should be aimed, among other areas, at ensuring information and cyber security of Ukraine. The National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine must inform the public about its activities through its official website or mass media. The duty of informing the population through the mass media about the national security objectives is also assigned to local executive bodies. Article 10 Public Oversight of this Law states that mass media should inform society about the state of protection of Ukraine’s national interests. The task of counterintelligence protection of cyber security and information security is assigned to the Security Service of Ukraine. Besides, a special government body — the State Service for Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine — operates in Ukraine to ensure, among other things, the protection of critically important information, as well as the functioning and development of telecommunications.

The Law of Ukraine “On Information” (Law 2657-XII, 2023) states that ensuring information security of Ukraine is one of the main directions of the state information policy in the country. Article 6 of this Law states that the right to information is ensured by the obligation of subjects of power to inform the public and mass media about their activities and decisions made. Mass media are defined in the Law as one of the sources of legal information. The entire Section 3 of the Law fully deals with the activities of journalists, mass media and their

employees, including the prohibition of interference in their activities, guarantees of activities, etc. Article 24(2) determines that control over the content of information disseminated by the mass media is prohibited, including that it is not possible to prevent the mass media from disseminating (not disseminating) certain information, criticizing political figures, forcing the concealment of information important to society, etc. (except for cases provided by law).

The Law of Ukraine “On State Support of the Mass Media and Social Protection of Journalists” (Law 540/97-BP, 2023) establishes the specifics of the organization of financial, economic and other state support for the mass media, and also regulates the issue of preventing monopolization of markets in the field information activity, regulates the aspects of privatization in the field, and also establishes the equality of mass media of different forms of ownership.

The Information Security Strategy (Decision n0080525-21, 2021) defines key national and global challenges in the information sphere. The key global challenges include the growing number of global campaigns aimed at spreading misinformation in society, the information policy of the Russian Federation, the influence of social networks, and the low level of media literacy of the population. National challenges in the information sphere are primarily connected with the propaganda of the Russian Federation — the information influence of the aggressor on the people of Ukraine, its informational dominance in the temporarily occupied territories,

ineffective response to misinformation campaigns, inappropriate structure of the strategic communications system, ineffective regulation of relations in the field of information and protection of journalists, manipulation of public consciousness regarding European and Euro-Atlantic integration, etc. In response to these challenges, the Information Security Strategy defines a list of strategic goals aimed at countering propaganda, developing media culture, improving media literacy of the population, etc.

In the context of the study, more recent documents relating directly to the activities of social providers and European integration, harmonization of national legislation with European legislation, and establishment of relevant communications should be considered separately. The first is the Law of Ukraine “On Media” (Law 2849-IX, 2023b) developed by Ukrainian specialists in cooperation with the international partners and business representatives in the media field. The scope of this law extends to the entire media sphere — from printed publications, radio and television to Internet media. The law is aimed at counteracting the information policy of the aggressor and preventing the restriction of freedom of speech, and is also consistent with the norms and requirements of the EU.

Another important document is the Strategy for Communication of European integration for 2018-2021 (hereinafter — the Strategy). This document provides that the state information space is formed by state communication resources, Ukrainian politicians, EU institutions, analytical and research centres, mass media, and public associations. The activities of the latter are regulated by another legislative act mentioned above — the Law of Ukraine “On Public Associations” (Law 4572-VI, 2013). The Strategy notes that Ukrainians’ perception of European integration depends not only on the

national information system, but also on the negative influence of Russian propaganda. The main factor in the process of planning communication activities should be the level of understanding and attitude of the population towards European values and readiness to act. It is also important to take into account socio-demographic characteristics, as well as indicators of mass information consumption.

The effectiveness of the current legislative acts, the amendments thereto made after the beginning of the large-scale invasion, as well as the information policy in general can be analysed by evaluating the indicators of mass information consumption. The next subsection analyses some indicators of mass information consumption, which demonstrate the level of public trust in strategic public policy providers, quality of information, main sources, etc.

Mass information consumption indicators

How can the impact and effectiveness of public policy providers be assessed, and what key indicators can be used in such an assessment?

The analysis of mass information consumption indicators will be used to assess the impact and effectiveness of strategic public policy providers in the context of war and European integration. The most important indicators in this study are the level of trust of the population in social institutions, the main sources of information, the assessment of the quality of media materials, and the level of media literacy of the population. These indicators demonstrate the level of efficiency of social providers, while demonstrating the population’s attitude towards them. The indicator of the level of media literacy gives grounds for a more objective interpretation of the obtained results. Figure 3 shows the results of a survey on the level of trust of Ukrainian citizens in certain social institutions.

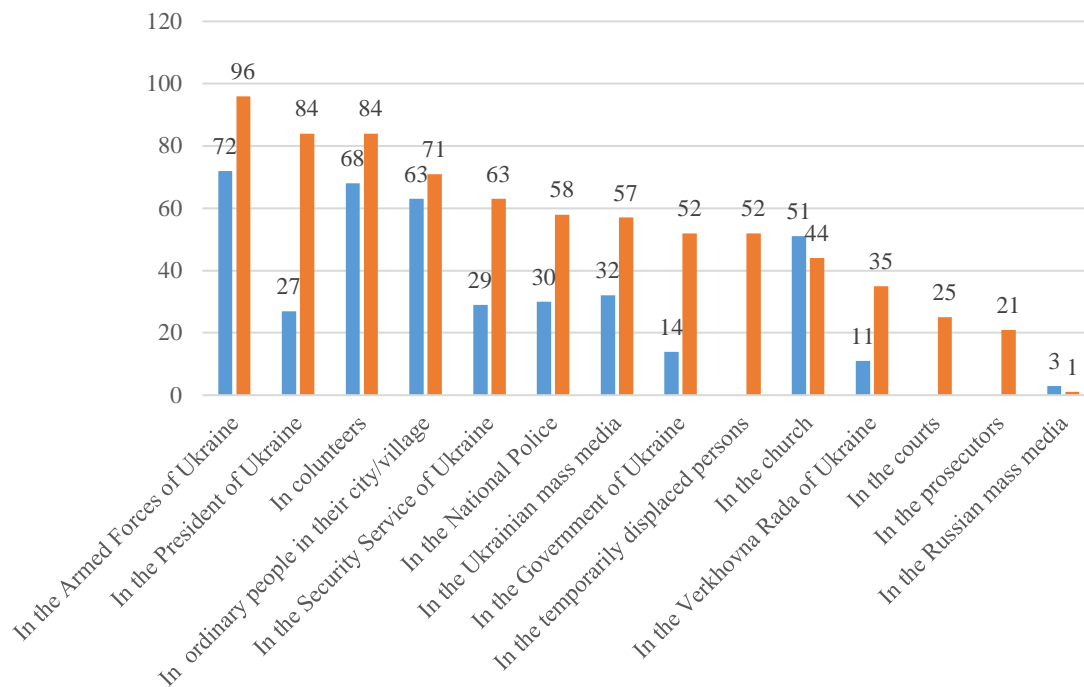


Figure 3. Dynamics of trust in social institutions, % trust (Hrushetskyi, 2023)

The data in Figure 3 indicate an increased trust of Ukrainians in all social institutions in 2022 compared to 2021, except for the church and the Russian mass media. Among other things, this result demonstrates the effectiveness of social providers. In 2022, the trust in mass media increased by 25%, more than half of surveyed Ukrainians trust mass media. A positive shift is the decreased trust in the Russian mass media,

which shows the effectiveness of state policy and the activities of social providers in the field of countering propaganda and misinformation, which is defined as a strategic goal in many legislative acts to ensure the security and development of the information sphere. Figure 4 shows the sources from which Ukrainians get current information.

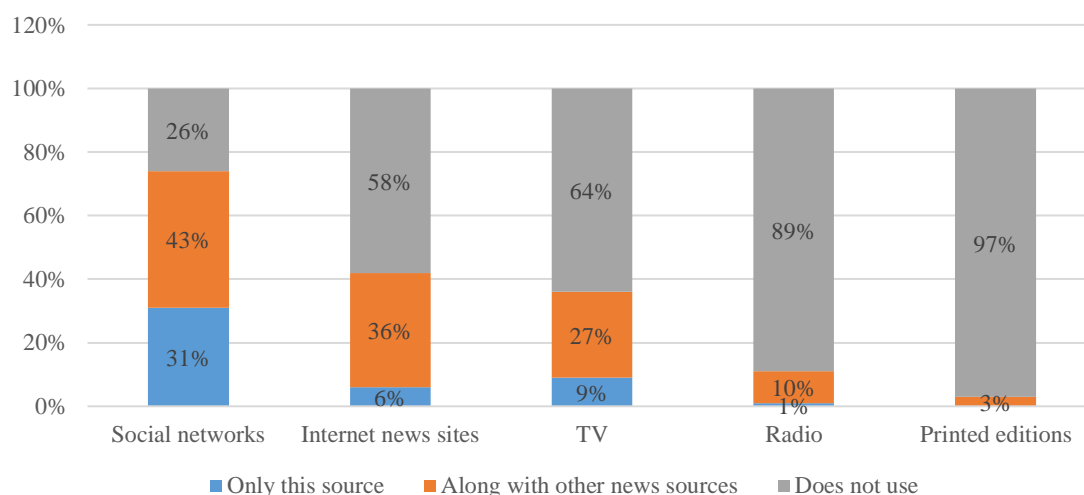


Figure 4. Use of media for reading news during the month (USAID-Internews, 2022)

Therefore, we can note the further growth of the influence of social networks as a source of current information and news for Ukrainians (about 74% of respondents use them). Less than half of the respondents also use Internet news

sites and TV as sources of information (42% and 36%, respectively). The popularity of radio and print editions is significantly lower (11% and 3%, respectively). Figure 5 shows how Ukrainians evaluate the received information.

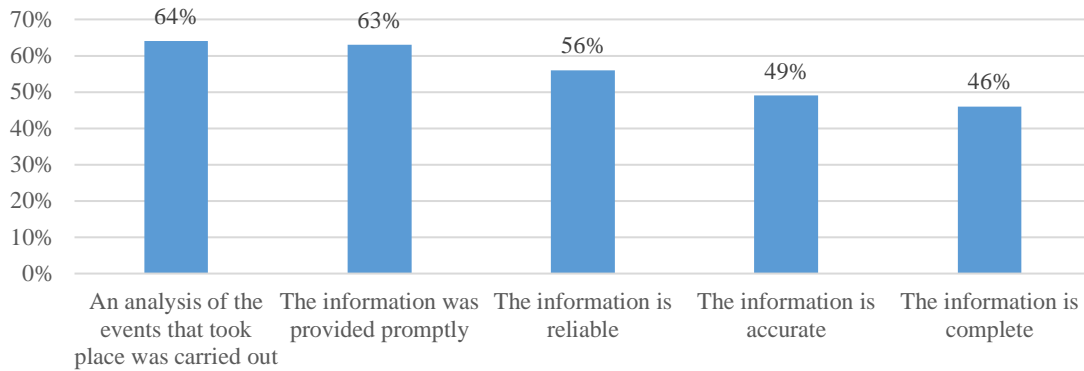


Figure 5. Assessment of the quality of materials about the course of the war (USAID-Internews, 2022)

Therefore, more than half of Ukrainians believe that they receive an appropriate analysis of the events, and the information is prompt and reliable. More than half of the respondents have doubts that the provided information is accurate and complete. It can be concluded that respondents' satisfaction with the quality of information provided by public policy providers is medium. Figure 6 supplements the analysis of survey results with a study of the criteria for media literacy of the population.

As can be summarized from Figure 6, some criteria of media literacy of the population do not differ in stable decreasing or increasing trends. A positive factor is a relatively stable increase in the share of respondents paying attention to the source of news. However, in 2022, the share of

respondents who take into account whether different points of view are presented in the source in their judgments reduced. It can be assumed that during the war, the point of view on events is determined primarily by considerations regarding the national security of Ukraine and countering the aggressor, which is supported by the majority of social providers. Therefore, many Ukrainians do not consider other points of view, which may indicate increased national unity of Ukrainians in opposing the aggressor. The second chart shows the indicators that show the insufficient media literacy awareness of the population. The trends of these indicators are more prone to fluctuations than the trends in the first chart, but the share of respondents who do not know how to distinguish trustworthy information most predictably decreases.

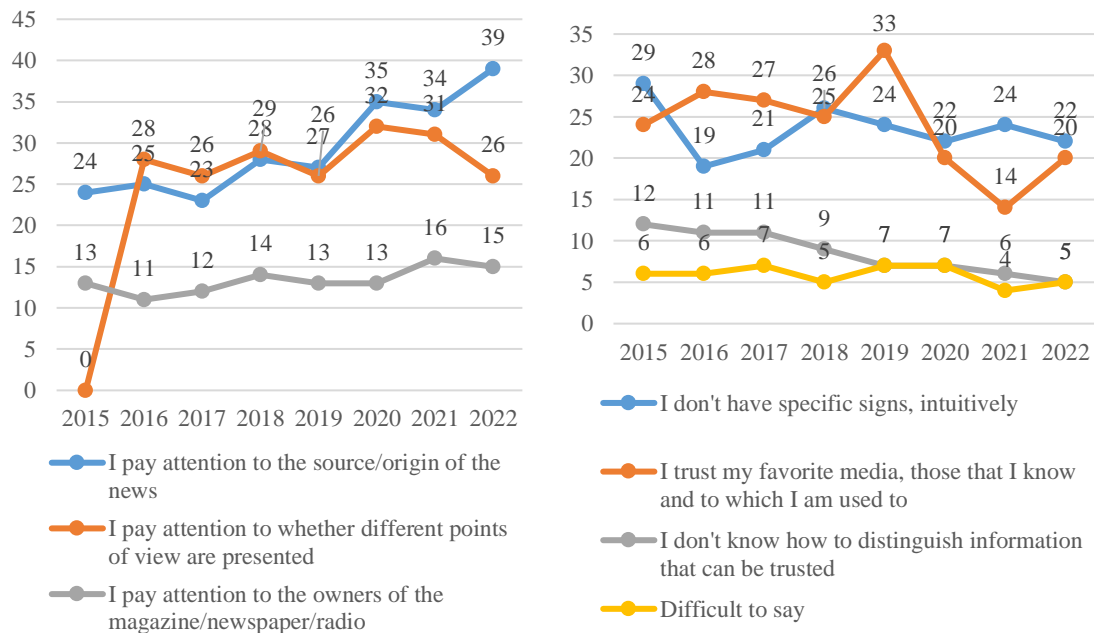


Figure 6. Evaluation of media literacy (USAID-Internews, 2022)

Discussion

The analysis carried out in the article gives grounds to conclude that strategic public policy providers have a significant influence on the information policy of the state. In turn, information policy shapes the mood of the population and is the main weapon in the psychological and information war waged by the aggressor country. The study of legislative changes and the assessment of the mass information consumption by the population of Ukraine provides the basic framework of the activities of strategic public policy providers. On the one hand, they should function within the limits of the law and have appropriate regulation. On the other hand, they meet the needs of the population in terms of ensuring access to relevant and timely information, protect the interests of the Armed Forces and the country as a whole.

It is important to note the work of Kurgat and Jerop (2023) in the context of the study. The researchers study different views regarding the relationship between mass media and society. On the one hand, mass media can be considered as an important source of information for people, and therefore they significantly influence people's behaviour and their decisions. On the other hand, some approaches note that society influences the mass media to the extent that the latter are perceived as the voice of the people. So, mass media can both influence public opinion and be a means of its reflection. The research conducted in the article does not demonstrate such relationships, and it is difficult to judge from its results whether public policy providers are the voice of the population or influence the opinions themselves. However, the state of war significantly strengthened the national unity. So, it can be assumed that the sentiments of Ukrainians coincide with the main theses of national public policy providers and have a mutual influence.

The study found that modern users mostly receive information through online media. A number of studies identify the threats associated with this trend. Soroka and Wlezien (2019) established that the issue of public policy coverage by mass media is particularly important in the era of digitalization. The researchers established that in modern democratic countries, the mass media can both inform and mislead the population for a specific purpose. Baum and Potter (2019) noted that modern changes in media and politics associated with the development of Internet technologies can

contribute to increased instability in foreign policy, causing unexpected and destabilizing changes in public sentiments. McGregor (2019) notes the narrowing and distortion of the nature of the state system among the negative consequences of the emergence and development of social networks. For journalists, using social media for studying public opinion, extends opportunities and also gives marginalized voices easier access to elites. On the other hand, the public sentiments created by social media are not comprehensive and representative. That is, while social media can help expand journalistic understanding of public opinion, it is important to interpret it contextually, taking into account other sources of information about public opinion. Habermas (2022) notes that the consequences of digitalization regarding the role of mass media in the public sphere can lead to the expansion and fragmentation of this sphere, as well as the transformation of almost any of its participants into a potential author. The researchers prove that the spread of digital mass media decreases the role of classic mass media, and also poses threats to the traditional role of the public sphere in terms of the formation of discursive opinion and will. This is explained by the development of digital media outside the commercial sphere, and the low control of communications on the Internet. As a result, this threatens shaping public opinion of an increasingly large share of the population in a rational way.

A study by Arroyave and Romero-Moreno (2022) analyses how the spread of misinformation and manipulation through digital media caused the rejection of the 2016 peace agreement in Colombia. For this purpose, the researchers analysed Twitter accounts using multimodal and sentiment analysis. It was determined that similar manipulations were adapted and used in digital media as in traditional media, but greater penetration of such manipulations and weaker control worsened the situation. As a result, Twitter contributed to the rejection of the peace agreement by citizens, in which propaganda played not the least role. Studying information on Twitter regarding the attitude of the population of the EU countries to the relations between the EU and China, India and the Russian Federation, Schmitt (2021) established that the interest of citizens in this problem is growing. EU citizens express the least positive attitude towards the EU's relations with the Russian Federation. With regard to the Russian Federation, the EU is ready to use more decisive and firm language, as well as to discuss issues in the field of conflicts with Ukraine,

Syria, and Iran. Besides, the spread of propaganda and misinformation by the Russian Federation is often mentioned. Konstankevych et al. (2022) study the use of “simulacra” as an element of the informational struggle of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The researchers define this term as images of things that do not exist in reality. The examples may include anti-Ukrainian “simulacra” regarding “Nazis in Ukraine”, “fascists in Kyiv”, “crucified children”, “atrocities of punitive battalions” and “Ukraine’s use of prohibited weapons”. The aim of using these “simulacra” is to change the perceptions of the nature of the conflict in the target groups for the aggressor’s needs.

These works mostly focus on the threats posed by digitalization in the context of the public policy providers, in particular, destabilization of the relationship between the state and society through misinformation and propaganda. The analysis carried out in the article confirms this opinion — the influence of pro-Russian propaganda through all communication channels, including digital ones, is destabilizing and threatens national interests. The study also noted positive trends for the case of Ukraine — the growth of the public trust in the Ukrainian mass media and other national institutions, the development of the legislation to regulate and support public policy providers, etc. Digitization also plays not the last role in these processes, as it penetrates into all spheres of public relations more and more deeply, and digital channels are leading for obtaining information.

Mass media can be defined as the main providers of public information, however, public organizations are closely related to mass media, can disseminate information through media resources, and also own them. Therefore, the work takes into account the studies that reveal the peculiarities of the activities of public organizations along with mass media. Vozniuk (2021) emphasizes the important role of public organizations in the protection of Ukraine’s cyberspace. The researcher notes that public and volunteer organizations, without coercion or calls from the state authorities, independently resist information threats, as well as record videos (including in Luhansk and Donetsk), reveal information about the movement of Russian troops, refute fakes and misinformation. Besides, public organizations influence the state authorities, forcing them to settle certain issues of information protection of state authorities, disseminate information on the appropriate use of social networks and increase media literacy of the population.

Cooperation of state bodies with such organizations in information protection, optimization of communication in other states, disclosure of the mechanism of pro-Russian forces on EU society, the budget of public organizations, etc. remain problematic aspects of the activities of public organizations. Prykhodko and Dokalenko (2020) identified a number of problems that exist in the interaction between public authorities and civil society institutions in Ukraine. Imperfect and/or lack of legislative regulation of certain issues of interaction was noted among such shortcomings, which may result in reluctance to cooperate. Moreover, there are cases when individual representatives of public organizations could abuse their position and even oppose the organization to the authorities, which interferes with the work of the authorities. Some public organizations are only formal and do not have real leverage (for example, there are a large number of anti-corruption public organizations, but their effectiveness remains low). Another problem is the isolation of the authorities, which can cause the inconsistency of some of their decisions with the interests of the public. Civil society could become the basis for the development of the country, but the non-acceptance of reforms by many citizens and their satisfaction with the state’s paternalistic attitude towards them becomes an obstacle thereto. So, public organizations can bring significant benefits, in particular, for ensuring information security and informing the population. However, their activities require increased attention, appropriate regulation with respect to the rights of such associations, as well as stimulation of their socially beneficial activities.

Conclusions

The world experience proves that the role of public policy providers – traditional and digital media, public and volunteer organizations – can be decisive in making decisions that directly and significantly affect public life and national security. They influence the public opinion, inform the public about current events and government decisions, improving the information literacy of the population, protecting the rights of citizens, ensuring information security, and combating misinformation. The research found that the state authorities of Ukraine attach great importance to the development and support of public policy providers, especially in the context of improving the legislative framework. The government of Ukraine adopted a number of regulatory legal acts on the activity of public policy providers

after the full-scale invasion. They concerned, in particular, harmonization of their activities with the norms and standards of the European Union. The analysis of the results of public surveys confirms the effectiveness of the activities of social providers by increasing the trust of the population in social institutions. The medium level of satisfaction with the information provided among the population was also established. Most of the respondents get up-to-date information online. No significant changes in the trends of media literacy indicators of the population were found. The results of the study can be applied by government representatives and public policy providers to improve their efficiency in the context of choosing the optimal sources for information coverage, as well as identifying aspects to which attention should be strengthened. In particular, this is the quality of information provided, as well as the level of media literacy of the population. Further research may focus on a detailed analysis of the impact of manipulation, misinformation and propaganda on the public opinion during the war and in the context of European integration using the example of one of the leading online media channels.

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