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**INSTRUMENTS AND MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTING POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS IN THE UKRAINIAN SOCIO-POLITICAL SPACE (EXPERT SURVEY RESULTS)**

Based on the expert survey results, the article identifies the most effective instruments and mechanisms for implementing political communications in the Ukrainian socio-political space. The leading trends in the implementation of new mechanisms and instruments for implementing political communications are considered: firstly, the dominance of certain forms of political communication in different countries depends on the model of democracy – representative, participatory, deliberative; secondly, the mechanisms and instruments of political communication in the participatory model of democracy are presented in all democratic countries, including Ukraine, but their effectiveness depends on the authorities taking into account the recommendations and proposals provided by citizens and civil society; thirdly, deliberative instruments of political communication are present in different models of the democratic process in the format of mini-publics; fourthly, among the areas of application of the online format of political communications, the following can be distinguished: development and implementation of e-government and e-democracy instruments; promotion of the image of political and political parties; use of social networks by citizens as a platform for political participation and discussion (deliberation). It has been determined that the main instruments for implementing political communications under martial law are online social media and classical media (television, press, radio). Deliberative instruments of political participation in the format of discussion and consensus decision-making on problematic socio-political issues in Ukrainian society have not become widespread or have not been used at all in practical terms.

**Key words:** political communication, socio-political space, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, mini-publics, electronic democracy, social Internet media.

**Relevance of the research topic.** Modern directions of social development, social changes, development of information and communication technologies, renewal and reformatting of political processes in democratic societies contribute

to the emergence and implementation of mechanisms and instruments for implementing political communications. Despite the rather strong influence of traditional communication channels and instruments in the political sphere (classical mass media, forms of communicative interaction during the electoral process, etc.), today the instruments that meet the development of modern societies are gaining leading importance. Therefore, we will focus on the consideration of the mechanisms and instruments for the implementation of political communications, which have a trend for further development and application in modern models of democracy.

However, it is necessary to note some problematic aspects of such an analysis.

Firstly, the distinction between the concepts of “mechanisms” and “instruments” implies the definition of the breadth of application: the mechanism is a broader concept that includes all aspects of the functioning of the institution of political communication (object, subject, goals, result), while the instruments for the implementation of political communications have procedural and technological characteristics, the application of which depends on the theoretical methodology.

Secondly, the identification of the most popular and available mechanisms and instruments for the implementation of political communications implies their identification both in the national, Ukrainian, and in the global and European political space.

Thirdly, the emergence and development of the latest mechanisms and instruments for the implementation of political communications are influenced by global and local factors: globalization, which promotes the incorporation of the best political and communication practices of other countries and their interpenetration; informatization, in our opinion, today has the greatest influence on the reformatting of the process of political communication on a global scale, despite the political structure and, importantly, the dominance of a certain model of democracy in a particular country; integration, which contributes to the creation of common and unified mechanisms and instruments for the implementation of political communications (for example, the practice of political communications in the EU); the Russian-Ukrainian war has a significant impact on the communication interaction between the government and society, as well as on the mechanisms and instruments of international political communication.

Fourthly, the dominance of certain forms of political communication in different countries depends on the model of democracy – representative, participatory, deliberative, however, these models do not exist in their “ideal” form, and their elements are involved in all developed democracies, therefore, almost all the mechanisms and instruments for implementing political.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Among the publications on the problems of political communication of such authors as: M. Azhazha, A. Akayomova, Yu. Bokoch, A. Budanova, A. Vayer, T. Voronova A. Dorofeyev, A. Vinnichuk, V. Dabizha, A. Danko-Sliptsova, A. Maiboroda, I. Pronoza, Fanishin, T. Shlemkevich, I. Tsikul, D. Yakovlev and many others.

**Methodological basis of the research.** The methodological basis of the dissertation is general scientific methods of cognition of social phenomena and processes and sociological methods of obtaining empirical data. The following methods were used in the research: logical-historical, structural-functional and comparative analysis; analysis and synthesis.

**Identification of previously unresolved parts of the problem to which the article is devoted.** The scientific work identifies the most effective tools and mechanisms for implementing political communications in the Ukrainian socio-political space; it examines the leading trends in the implementation of new mechanisms and tools for implementing political communications.

**Formulation of the objectives of the article, presentation of the main material of the research with full justification of scientific results.** The purpose of the study is to determine the most effective instruments and mechanisms for implementing political communications in the Ukrainian socio-political space based on the results of an expert survey.

In modern scientific discourse, there are many definitions of the concept of “political communication”. Yes, the most famous and widespread definition of R.-J. Schwarzenberg is the process of transmitting political information, through which information circulates between elements of the political system, as well as between the political and social systems. The continuous process of information exchange is carried out both between individuals and between those who govern and those who are governed, with the aim of achieving agreement (Akaymova, 2011, p. 89).

In domestic political opinion, there are quite a lot of interpretations of the concept of “political communication”. According to V. Dabizha, “political communications are a complex set of processes, methods, acts, circulation, transmission, exchange and interaction between various elements of the political system: the state, political forces, civil society, population groups and individuals, etc. Yu. Tishchenko defines systemic political communication as a process that covers the political sphere of human life, through which communication occurs between government bodies, political parties, public organizations and movements, officials, voters, and the population. The establishment and reproduction of communication processes between political parties and voters, and voters' awareness of the activities of political parties contribute to the legitimization of political entities in society, which is an integral part of the institutionalization of democracy and its consolidation” (Tyshchenko, Bayor, Tovt, Horobchyshyna, 2010, p. 10). I. Pronoza, analysing the existing definitions of the concept of “political communication”, identified the following characteristic features and groups of interpretations (Pronoza, 2021, p. 76–77): 1) political communication is a public discussion primarily about the distribution of the budget and powers; 2) political communication acts as a targeted action through the use of various forms of communication by political competitors; 3) political communication as a dynamic element of the political system that completely forms socio-political attitudes in the mass consciousness; 4) political communication is considered as a communication process consisting of such elements as political subjects and institutions, mass media, audience, media messages, and the level of their interaction; 5) political communication as a plane of influence on the recipient of the message.

To assess the effectiveness of some tools and mechanisms for implementing political communications, an expert survey was conducted (August 2024 – December 2024, n = 158). Given the martial law and the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war, the expert survey was conducted via the Internet (e-mail correspondence, Facebook social network, Telegram channels). The sample was random, randomized by the professional status of the expert (scientist, university teacher; public figure, representative of a public organization; deputy of a regional or city council, representative of a political party; journalist, media representative, blogger).

Evaluation of the effectiveness of some tools and devices for implementing political communications (Fig. 1–2).

According to experts, the leading places in the effectiveness rating are occupied by social online media (66%) and classical media (65%), which in the structure of political communication act as channels for transmitting and exchanging political information. Moreover, social online media have a feedback function, and classical media act only as transmitters of political information and messages. Of particular importance at the present stage of social development are social media, the emergence of which contributes to the development of the latest information and communication technologies for the implementation of communication on the Internet. Information and communication technologies act as a relevant form of political communication, which in turn leads to the emergence of new channels and methods of communication interaction between political entities, among which civil society is acquiring a more significant role in political processes. The Internet space is characterized by the interactivity of communication, which in the context of political communication is called “network activism” and “cyberactivism”, which are understood as information activities and organizational actions for the political mobilization of citizens (Tesfaye, 2021, p. 137–138). The Internet space and the features of its media environment form a new procedural model of political communication, the mediatization of politics, manifested in such moments as the emergence of new socio-political and public movements through the unification of local communities through computer networks and the expansion of opportunities for direct participation of citizens in political processes (Shlemkevych, 2022, p. 128). L. Tesfaye highlights the following features of the Internet as a political communication space: structured audience, “horizontal” communication, content generation by users, influence of user assessments on the perception of messages, high mobilization potential, unlimited, multimedia “current political situation, public opinion influencers, processes of horizontal communication between citizens and online platforms on which political communication processes take place” act (Tesfaye, 2021, p. 62). Thus, in the modern information space, qualitatively new structural elements of political communication are formed: firstly, the subjects are the network community (as Internet users); representatives of government bodies involved in e-government; information services of political parties and blogs and websites of public organizations; secondly, new channels of political communication arise – social media (social networks, blogs, chats, forums, etc.).

Social networks play a special role in the modern information society as a channel of political communication, which allows expressing one's views on social and political events in society, and given the global nature of network communication, on events in the international political space. Social networks in general and in the Internet space in particular, which can be defined in political discourse as an instrument of political pressure and control, provide an opportunity for new forms of social coordination carried out without a formal leader and acting as factors of political freedom and political will, and facilitate the transition from representative democracy to participatory democracy. As A. Dorofeev and A. Dubinka note, a social network can be considered in two aspects: firstly, as a channel of political communication, which is characterized by interactivity, information exchange and feedback between subjects of political communication (government bodies, officials, political parties, political leaders, civil society institutions); secondly, the social network itself acts as a net-

work community, which is characterized by certain values, political and civic orientations, communication models and norms, etc. (Dorofeev, Dubinka, 2022, p. 101).

One of the significant aspects of social networks as channels of political communication in modern society is also their use in the electoral and election processes through the use of tools for shaping public opinion with the introduction of digital marketing technology, which today is “a new, but very promising way to promote political ideas or candidates through forums, blogs. Catches” (Dotsenko, 2014, p. 97).

On the other hand, social networks have become a significant part of e-government, where government and administrative bodies carry out their professional activities both in an additional communication channel and by establishing a dialogue with civil society.

Thus, based on the analysis of the role of social media as a channel of political communication and the influence of social networks on political and government relations and processes, on the activities of various political and institutional entities, we can talk about the relevance of forming a new model of political communication based on the principles of involving citizens in the decision-making process through the use of modern information and communication technologies.

Taking into account the influence of the process of informatization of public-state relations, experts give a fairly high assessment of the use of information and communication technologies in public administration, namely the use of electronic governance and democracy tools (52%). Elections as the main tool of representative democracy (43%) occupy a significant place in the resulting rating.

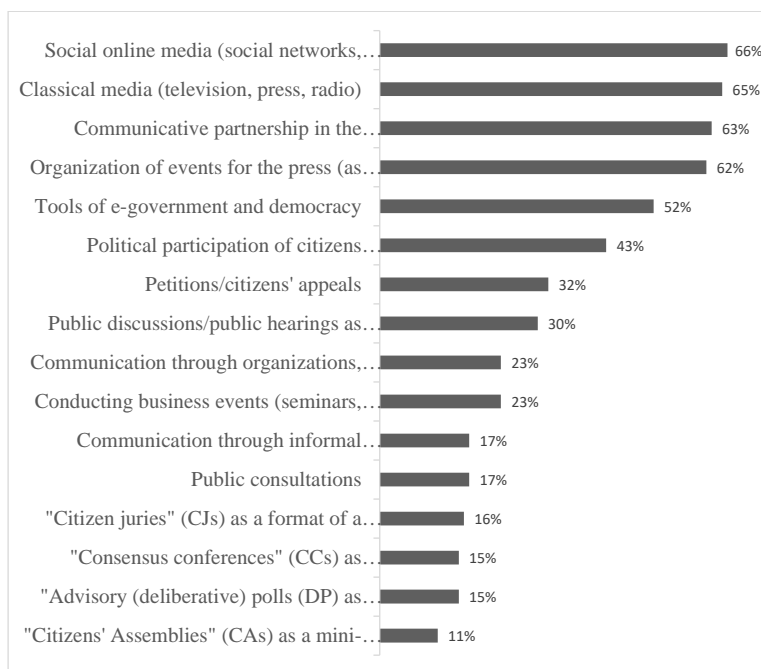


Fig. 1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of instruments and mechanisms for implementing political communications (8 answers were possible)

Of particular importance for this study is the definition of the evaluation of the effectiveness of mechanisms and instruments for implementing political communications in the context of the participatory and deliberative model of democracy.

Mechanisms and instruments for implementing political communications in the participatory model of democracy are based on the principle of political participation of citizens. Unlike representative democracy, where political participation is mainly represented in the electoral law, participatory democracy involves the involvement of citizens in political processes, making management decisions (especially at the local level, at the level of local self-government), therefore the main instruments for implementing political communication concern interactive communication between citizens of all citizens. Among the instruments of political communications in the model of participatory democracy, one can highlight petitions/appeals, public discussions/public hearings, public consultations.

Communicative partnership occupies a special place in the interaction of the authorities and civil society. The basis of partnership interaction is dialogue and cooperation, and in the context of the communicative paradigm of interaction between the authorities and government bodies and civil society, this is the establishment of effective communication in order to promote political participation of citizens, and the implementation of public control over the implementation of management decisions. As A. Rachinskaya notes: "Communicative partnership is not just a combination, division, coordination of the competencies of government bodies, local government bodies, and the public, but also the rational use of the buffer, mediating role of partnership between the state and the population, citizens" (Rachynska, 2020, p. 138). In general, communicative partnership as a mechanism for implementing political communications in the participatory model of democracy can be quite effective and productive, provided that there is active political participation of citizens and assistance to the state through the standardization of this process. According to the results of the expert survey, the tools of participatory democracy as a democracy of "participation" (petitions, appeals, public hearings and discussions, public consultations, organization of business events) are represented by estimates in the range of 17–32%. A special place is occupied by the mechanism of communication partnership between government bodies and civil society (63%) and the organization of PR measures (62%).

The crisis of representative democracy, the delegitimization of democratic structures and the public's lack of confidence in the protection of its rights and interests by representatives elected through the electoral procedure, the advisory nature of the instruments of participatory democracy have led to the so-called "deliberative turn", the essence of which was to renew the democratic process. In the deliberative model of democracy, political communication as a process of deliberation (discussion) presupposes the direct involvement of government representatives or civil society institutions in dialogue and discussion of current socio-political problems and political practices, the product of which is a rationally substantiated, consensus decision on the stated problems. Deliberative instruments of political communication are present in various models of the democratic process (especially in the model of participatory democracy), but, according to H. Lafont (Lafont, 2019), "it is necessary to transfer the instruments of deliberative (partially deliberative) democracy from the status of a "useful application" (Kononenko, 2023, p. 343). Summarizing all



the developments on the mechanisms and instruments of the deliberative paradigm, T. Andreychuk identified three main areas of research in the practice of deliberative political communication aimed at legitimizing political power through the mechanisms and instruments of discussion and debate (Kononenko, 2023, p. 32):

- the first direction provides for deliberative political communication within the framework of communicative interaction between different branches of government and parliamentary discussions and debates on the adoption of legislative acts (J. Besette, M. Steenbergen, J. Tulis, J. Ur, J. Steiner and others);

- the second direction concerns public participation – deliberative events with the participation of citizens, representatives of civil society organizations, during which a thorough discussion of socially important decisions and initiatives takes place (J. Dryzek, D. Kahane, K. Ross, J. Forester and others);

- the third direction (synthesized) provides for the involvement in the discussion of a wide range of institutions and associations, “including informal networks, mass media, organized advocacy groups, schools, foundations, private and non-profit institutions, legislative bodies, executive authorities and courts” (Mansbridge et al., 2012, p. 2). Thus, in the deliberative model of democracy there are many different mechanisms and instruments that form new practices of political discourse and have significant legitimation potential in making public and political decisions. Here we really need to agree with the opinion of D. Della Porta that “in normative debates, deliberative theories really promote communication spaces, exchange of opinions, construction of common definitions of the public good, which are fundamental for the legitimization of public decisions” (Porta della, 2013, p. 7). Deliberative instruments of political communication are present in different models of the democratic process (especially in the model of participatory democracy). The basic instrument of political communication in the deliberative version of democracy today are mini-publics (Citizens' Juries, Consensus Conferences, Planning Centres, Advisory (deliberative) Polls, Citizens' Assemblies). The format of mini-publics as instruments of political communication in the deliberative model of democracy today has the potential to strengthen political participation in making public and political decisions. Deliberative democracy tools, presented as different formats of mini-publics, received an efficiency rating of 11% to 17%. This is due to the fact that such forms of political participation in the format of discussion and consensus decision-making on problematic socio-political issues in Ukrainian society have not become widespread or have not yet been used in practice.

Differences in the efficiency ratings of political communication tools and mechanisms in various professional groups of experts were also analysed (Fig. 2):

- scientists have determined that in this period of development of Ukrainian society and under martial law, the most effective and efficient tools and mechanisms of political communication are: communicative partnership between government bodies and civil society (70%), classical media (68%) and social online media (68%).

For them, the tools of deliberative democracy – different formats of mini-publics – also turned out to be more significant; – representatives of public organizations gave the highest rating to communication partnership in interaction between the authorities and society (73%), social online media (63%) and PR events for the press (61%);

- representatives of political parties, regional and local deputies prefer classical media (70%), PR events for the press (57%) and social online media (54%). It should

be noted that, compared to other groups of experts, they give a higher rating to the instruments of representative (elections) and participatory (petitions, hearings, consultations) democracy;

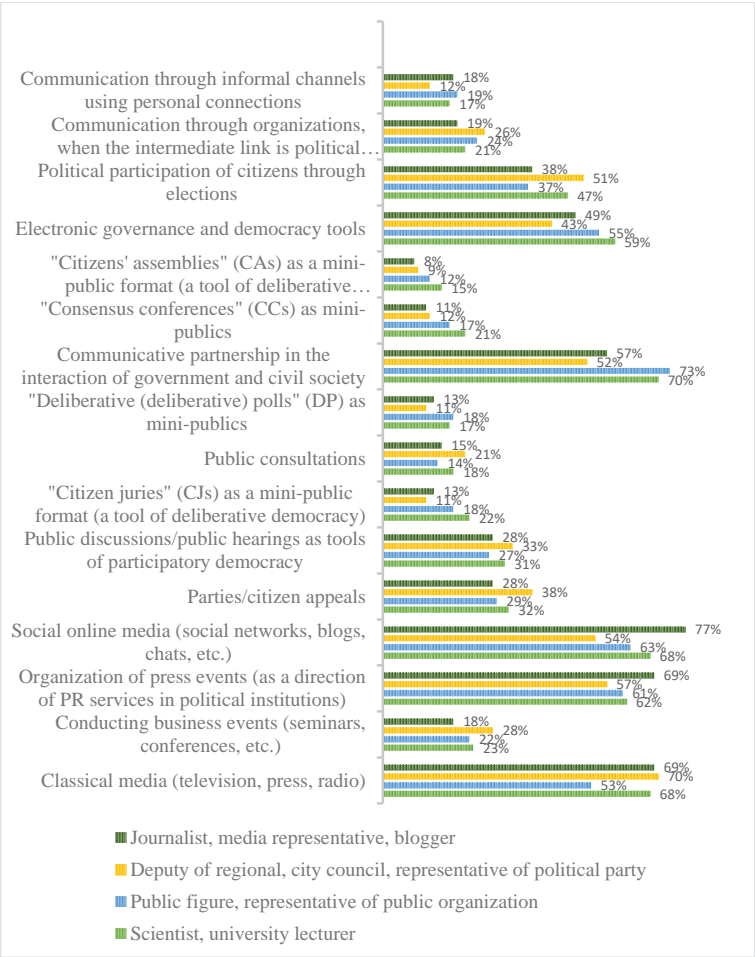


Fig. 2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of tools and mechanisms for implementing political communications depending on the professional status of experts (it was possible to choose 8 answers)

– representatives of the mass media gave the highest rating to such instruments of political communication as social online media (77%, and the highest figure among other professional groups of experts), classical media (69%) and PR events for the press (69%).

**Conclusions of the research and prospects for further research in this direction.** Therefore, summarizing the results of the study, the following conclusions can be made.

The leading trends in the introduction of new mechanisms and tools for implementing political communications in the global and national dimensions are considered:



firstly, the dominance of certain forms of political communication in different countries depends on the model of democracy – representative, participatory, deliberative; secondly, the mechanisms and tools of political communication in the participatory model of democracy are presented in all democratic countries, including Ukraine, but their effectiveness depends on the fact that the authorities take into account the recommendations and proposals provided by citizens and civil society: petitions/appeals, public discussions/public hearings, public consultations, public consultations; thirdly, deliberative tools of political communication are present in different models of the democratic process (especially in the model of participatory democracy). The basic instrument of political communication in the deliberative version of democracy today are mini-publics (Civic Juries, Consensus Conferences, Planning Centres, Advisory (deliberative) Polls, Citizens' Assemblies). The format of mini-publics as instruments of political communication in the deliberative model of democracy today has the potential to strengthen political participation in making public and political decisions; fourthly, among the areas of application of the online format of political communications, the following can be distinguished: development and implementation of e-government and e-democracy instruments; promotion of the image of political and political parties; use of social networks by citizens as a platform for political participation and discussion (deliberation)

**Novelty of the research.** The results of the expert survey made it possible to determine that the main instruments for implementing political communications in martial law are online social media and classical media (television, press, radio). Deliberative instruments of political participation in the format of discussion and making a consensus decision on problematic socio-political issues in Ukrainian society have not become widespread or have not yet been used at all in practical terms. A promising direction for further research is the development of a model of a deliberative mechanism for implementing political communications.

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## **ІНСТРУМЕНТИ Й МЕХАНІЗМИ РЕАЛІЗАЦІЇ ПОЛІТИЧНИХ КОМУНІКАЦІЙ В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ СУСПІЛЬНО-ПОЛІТИЧНОМУ ПРОСТОРІ (РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ ЕКСПЕРТНОГО ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ)**

### **Резюме**

За результатами експертного опитування визначено найбільш ефективні інструменти й механізми реалізації політичних комунікацій в українському суспільно-політичному просторі. Розглянуто провідні тенденції впровадження нових механізмів та інструментів реалізації політичних комунікацій: по-перше, домінування тих чи інших форм політичної комунікації в різних країнах залежить від моделі демократії – представницької, партиципаторної, дорадчої; по-друге, механізми й інструменти політичної комунікації в партиципаторній моделі демократії є в усіх демократичних країнах, включно з Україною, але їх ефективність залежить від урахування владою рекомендацій і пропозицій, які надають громадяни

та громадянське суспільство; по-третє, деліберативні інструменти політичної комунікації є в різних моделях демократичного процесу у форматі мініпублік; по-четверте, серед сфер застосування онлайн-формату політичних комунікацій можна виділити: розроблення й упровадження інструментів електронного урядування й електронної демократії; підвищення іміджу політичних партій; використання громадянами соціальних мереж як платформи для політичної участі й дискусії. Визначено, що основними інструментами реалізації політичної комунікації в умовах воєнного стану є соціальні мережі онлайн і класичні ЗМІ (телебачення, преса, радіо). Деліберативні інструменти політичної участі у форматі дискусії та прийняття консенсусних рішень із проблемних суспільно-політичних питань в українському суспільстві не набули поширення або взагалі не використовувалися на практиці.

**Ключові слова:** політична комунікація, соціально-політичний простір, демократія участі, дорадча демократія, мініпубліки, електронна демократія, соціальні інтернет-медіа.