

## Development of social and communicative paradigm of public administration in the field of social networks

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### ABSTRACT

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The paper reflects the importance of social networks in the organization of social communication processes in public administration. The essence of communication in public administration and its paradigm is determined. The main differences between public administration and object-oriented public administration are shown. The paper also describes the importance of social networks in the conduct of communication processes compared to other communication channels. Research on the use of social networks in public administration is conducted based on the results of research of the Ukrainian Government and users of the Ukrainian social networks. The main trends in the use of social networks in public administration in Ukraine are described. According to the results of the study, the possible directions of social networks development in public administration in the context of preserving democratic values were proposed.

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## 1. Introduction

Technologies of public administration are widely introduced in developed countries (Ajina, 2019). These technologies use the tools of social groups' management based on public information, consultation, mediation and monitoring (Wijaya et al., 2019). The main feedback of public administration is the reaction of society to an event or phenomenon, which allows to assess the level of public satisfaction with the work of the government (Lestari et al., 2018). Every democratic state must improve social and communicative activities aimed at its population to implement the state development programs. Special communication channels are created to provide easy and bilateral communication (Pourkhani et al., 2019). They commonly include print media, television, radio, personal meetings and public events. Nowadays, social networks represent one of the most common and widely used communication channels. Social networks become increasingly popular in all countries. According to the statistics of 2020, about 3.5 billion people use different social networks which accounts for 45% of the world's population (Tjepkema, 2019; Tayebi et al., 2019; Eid et al., 2020). One of the reasons for such active use of social networks is their

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mobility and simplification which makes it possible to use them regardless of the person's location. According to the official data, 68% of all users use Facebook. Presently, Facebook's audience is 2.32 billion people per month. The number of users is growing every month, especially during the crisis of 2020, when people faced unemployment and strict quarantine. As for the age of the audience, it is mainly formed by young people and 90.4% of young people use social networks. Adults use social networks not so actively are 77.5% and only 48.2% of the elderly people use social networks. All these indicators show that the communication policy of the state through social networks allows to reach the majority of the population (Mohsin, 2020). The analysis of Ukraine's audience showed that 58% of the population are Facebook users, 41% actively watches YouTube video content and about 28% of the population are Instagram users. The new social network Telegram currently covers 14% of the population. The main factor in the popularity and spread of social networks is not only mobility but also freedom and equality. Social networks break boundaries and limitations in communications. All users regardless of their social status are equal. A democratic society is based on such pillars. Users of social networks are free to contact the officials, read or share their publications, create the field of interest around a particular content. The call of an ordinary person in the social network can get much more responses than the call of politicians or celebrities. That's why social networks are actively introduced into the public administration of all democracies. Nowadays, local authorities and central governments all over the world actively use social networks to improve communication and control processes. Unfortunately, freedom and equality, which have the greatest value in social networks, frequently becomes a problem in a hard process of democratic values development. This exactly the fact that forms the relevance of the current study.

## 2. Literature review

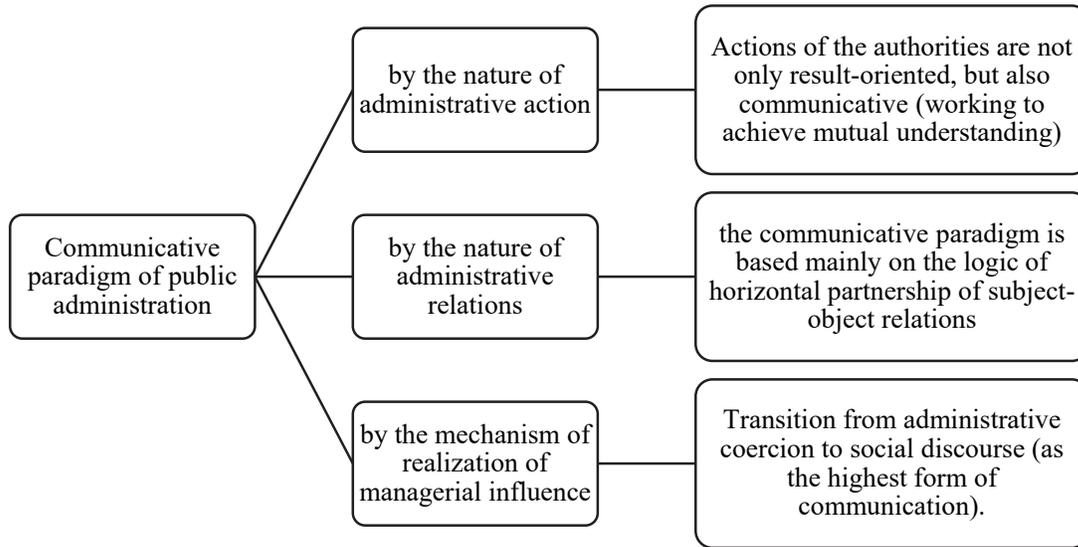
Wilson (1887) was the pioneer in studying the paradigm of public administration in the United States. He introduced the concept of public administration in his essay entitled "The Study of Administration" in 1887. Nowadays, there is a great need of new methods and principles in public administration. These include decentralized, mobile and innovative models, models combining the principles of state and market regulation, individual freedom and new forms of collective and personal responsibility. The development of synergetic (Haken, 2001), a separate chapter of self-organization concept, allowed to determine mathematical relationships between social and mental processes. The term "social network" was introduced in 1954 long before the advent of the Internet. It was first used by a British sociologist James Barnes, a representative of the Manchester school, with regard to a close relationship between two or more people (Grechko et al., 2016). This term was used separately from the term "family" or "tribe". Social networks did not define gender, age or ethnicity as concepts. Earlier in 1930s, Moreno (1934) started to apply network approaches in public administration. These were a kind of tools to influence society. These studies have led to interests in social networks in sociology and public administration. By 1970s, the social and communicative paradigm of public administration in the field of social networks began to develop rapidly. Wellman made an important contribution to the development of network analysis in its modern form (Freeman, 2004). The issue of communications in public administration with the use of social networks was also paid much attention to in Ukrainian scientific research. Thus, Pocheptsov studies communication in society, its types, mechanisms, features of functioning in the field of public policy in particular and the ways to achieve political goals. To his opinion, social networks can not only significantly influence, but also create their own specific "field of communication" between public authorities and citizens (Pocheptsov, 2001). Bebyk (2005) studies the features of communications and information management in the public area. He believes the domestic media should fully highlight the results of the government's work using all possible ways of communications. Teleshun (2009) considers the mechanisms of communication in the political area. He believes that social networks should work on a democratic basis. These are conditions when certain procedures are mandatory for both authorities and citizens. At the same time, the conducted research focuses mainly on the analysis of the communicational mechanism in public administration. However, insufficient attention has been paid to the development of communication systems as well as the paradigm of public administration. This is especially true in case of the development of social networks to improve public administration. This study analyzes theoretical and applied principles of public administration in the field of social networks and suggests directions for improving their social and communicative paradigm.

## 3. Results

Millennia of the state formation practices, which were based on the protection of human rights and freedoms, have formed an appropriate paradigm of public administration. Development of human civilization took place according to it. This paradigm is still used to shape state values. Its essence is to form a system of public administration, which has a subject-object nature. In this system, the state acts as a subject and society acts as an object. However, such relations of subjective and objective nature can hardly be called an effective interaction. This is a unilateral influence, which often shows signs of violence on the one hand and opposition on the other (Martynenko, 2003; Yahaya et al., 2018). That's why, it is necessary to create effective tools that will form effective and productive communication processes in order to support a bilateral interaction between the state and society.

In contrast to the subject-object paradigm, which reflects the purposeful influence of the subject on the object in order to change the state or behavior of the object (or rational action according to Weber), in terms of view of communicative paradigm, it is advisable to interpret public administration through a prism of intersubjectivity. Namely, the subject not only exerts

an influence on the object, but also coordinates its actions regarding this influence with other subjects (co-subjects) of administration.



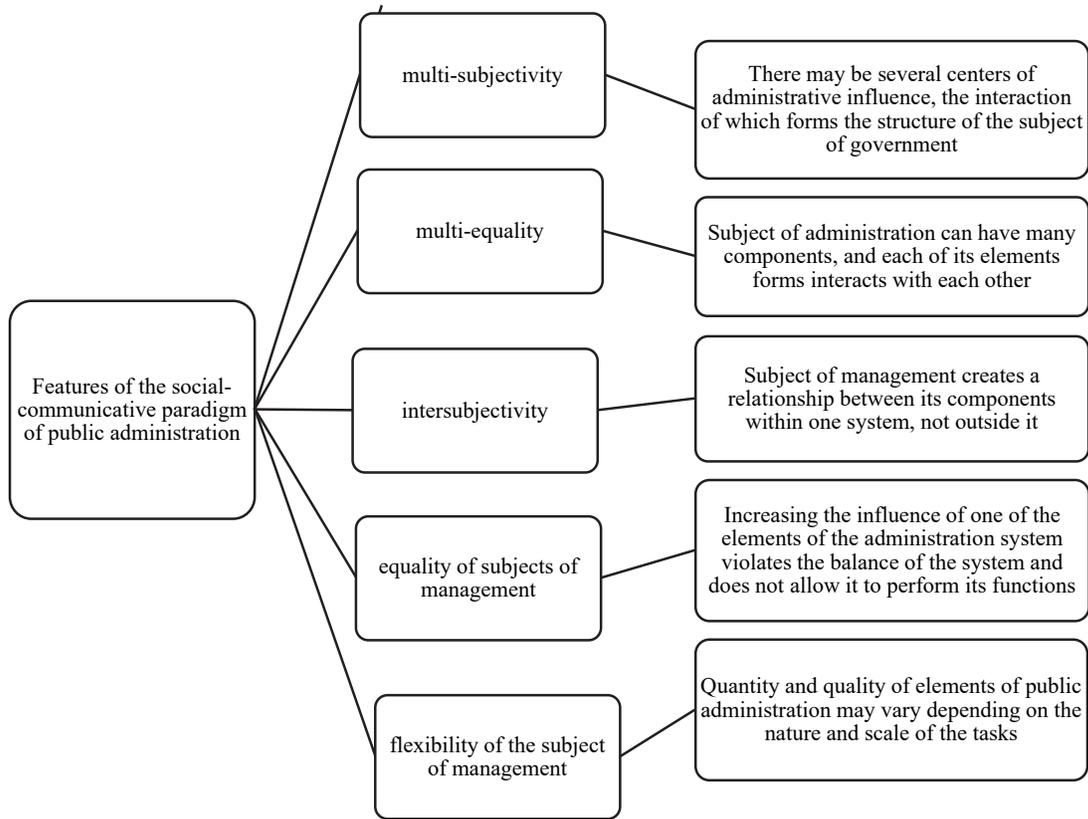
**Fig.1.** Main differences between communicative paradigm of public administration and the traditional subject-object paradigm

The communicative paradigm does not deny the existence of a subject-object type of relationship. However, within its framework, there is a transformation of action not on the object of administration, but on the goal to be achieved.

The main conceptual principles that determine the essence of the social and communicative paradigm of public administration include:

- transformation of the state from a monopoly subject of social development to one of the elements of the general system of public administration;
- transition of the state from a monopoly subject of social development to one of its co-subjects;
- formation of a triangle of power including government, citizens and other participants of public administration, which allows to take more effective decisions;
- public administration is based on the coordination of interests between government and citizens;
- regulation of interaction of management subjects on the basis of communicative ethics and communicative rationality;
- citizens act as a controlling authority and form the basis for the legitimacy of state power.

The main features of the social-communicative paradigm of public administration are shown in Fig. 2. Thus, the management of society is the main purpose of public administration. It consists of the purposeful influence of subjects of public administration on public, collective or group activities. This influence can be direct in the form of self-government, as well as institutional through specially created institutions, which include the state itself, political parties, enterprises, etc. Influence can also be direct in the form of self-government. The administration is an important feature of all organizational systems operating in the state. Due to it, society can develop and preserve itself. Thus, public administration is a complex process of interaction of two parts: the governing component and the governed component. Social networks represent one of the main tools for organizing mutual connections between these two parts. At the current stage of development of technological progress and information technology, the term “social networks” is used for web sources that allow to present yourself and communicate with the others, i.e. create an own page and communicate with other users, forming networks of “friends”, “colleagues” and “followers”. At the moment, there are more than 100 definitions of “social network” in the scientific literature. However, according to a purely scientific position, the term “social network” means the part of the web space where the users communicate with each other creating connections and communities of a certain character like family, profession, etc. Ivashneva (2012) describes the social network as a virtual platform that provides with its own tools the communication, supporting, creation, development and organization of social contacts, including data exchange between users as well as demands the preliminary creation of an account.



**Fig. 2.** Features of the social-communicative paradigm of public administration

Social networking is a multifaceted tool that creates a lot of various forms of communication. For instance, the following outline three forms:

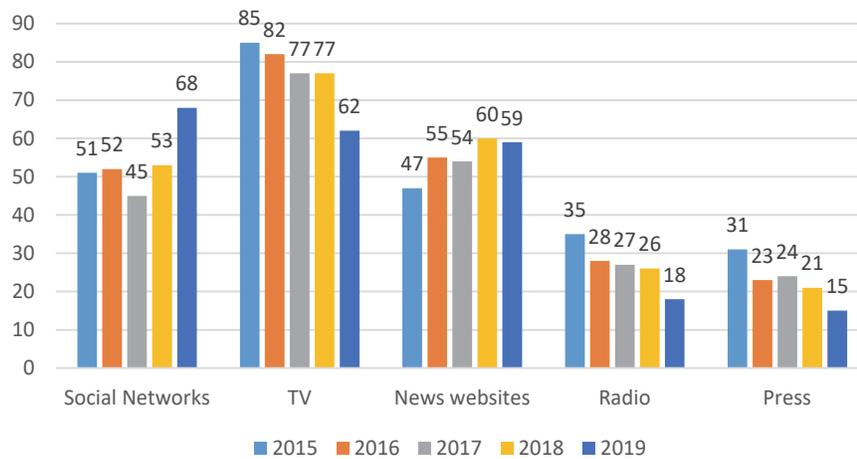
- 1) asynchronous one-to-one communication (private messages);
- 2) asynchronous many-to-many communication (communication in groups);
- 3) synchronous communication “one-to-one”, “one-and-several”, “one-to-several” (commenting on posts of individuals or pages).

Let's compare social networks to the other means of communication by means of a Table 1.

**Table 1**  
Advantages of social networks over traditional media

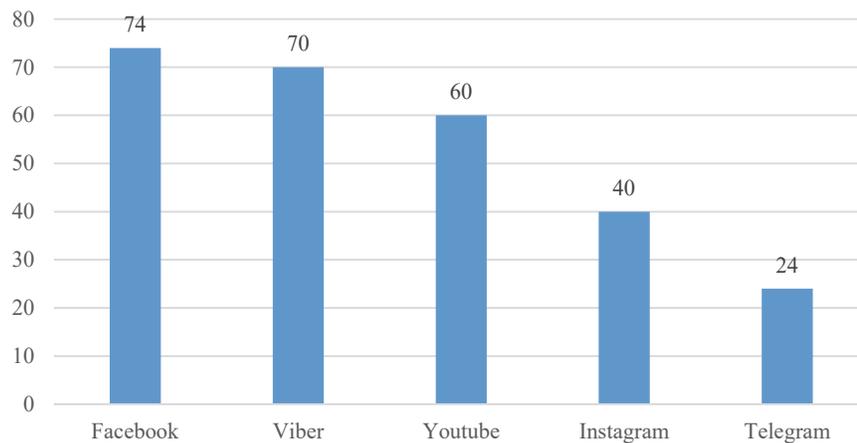
CRITERION	TRADITIONAL MEDIA	SOCIAL NETWORKS
<b>MULTIMEDIA</b>	Limited ability to combine visual, audio, video and printed aspects; speed and cost of delivery are not the best.	Can combine visual, text, audio and video content. The price of information exchange is much lower than the price in traditional media. The speed of information exchange is instant.
<b>PERSONALIZATION, AUTHORSHIP</b>	It is not possible to select content according to the interests of users. It is almost impossible to personalize content.	Provide the ability to choose information by area of interest. Delivery of information can happen in any form, including personal information, subscription to groups or pages.
<b>INTERACTIVITY</b>	The spread of information has the features of a monologue.	The information is presented in the form of a dialogue when each post can be commented, marked with emotion, blocked or bookmarked.
<b>LACK OF INTERMEDIARIES</b>	Impossibility of direct government influence on the population without an editorial form of information processing.	Informing the population takes place almost without mediation or editing, except in cases contrary to the policy of the social network.

According to statistics, television media lost the first place among the sources of news in 2019. During 2019, Facebook won the competitive struggle between the media channels in Ukraine, increasing the number of users by 15% (see Fig.3).



**Fig. 3.** Ukrainian media channels used during the last 30 days for getting news, %

The television audience is predominantly formed by the elderly people. Online media are popular among Ukrainians aged 18-45. The social function of the Internet is also becoming more and more important. In 2019, the percentage of those who used Internet to communicate via social networks, messengers and e-mail has increased significantly. The audience of social networks is formed by young people aged 18-45. The share of Facebook users continues to grow, Facebook's position as a source of news is strengthening too. Ukrainians also use Viber and YouTube, but these networks are not so active in distributing news content. Russian social networks are losing support among Ukrainians (See Fig.4).

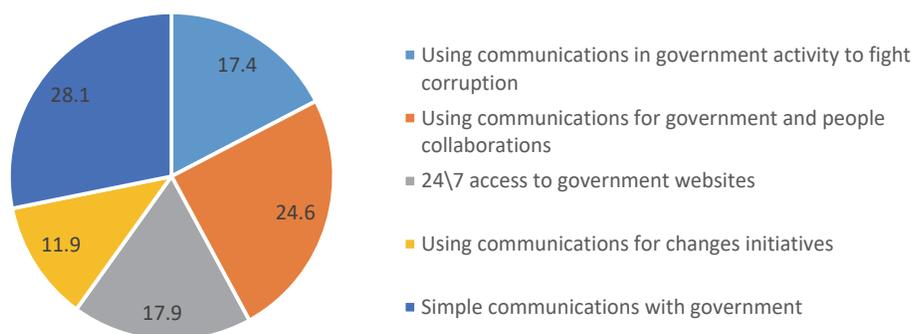


**Fig. 4.** Social media users in Ukraine in 2019, %

Thus, the interactive and operational capabilities of social networks allow making them one of the most important means of communication. They contribute greatly to the effective work with voters, media representatives, allies and competitors. Such interaction of politicians and government officials with the public becomes especially relevant not only during the current activities but also during the political struggle. It's also worth emphasizing that traditional media are committed to certain candidates, while social networks are indifferent to any. Let's consider the paradigm of public administration through social networks in more detail. Nowadays, social networks allow the manager to interact with society in three possible ways.

1. Inform the population providing the information on certain events or phenomena through their own communication channels. This is usually achieved by publishing information on your social network page.
2. Digital counseling. Social networks enable streaming and video conferencing with users. Live communication allows to quickly track users' reaction regarding certain events.

3. Digital decision making. Citizens can take decisions discussing a particular problem (United Nations, 2016). There is a possibility to create a petition in Ukraine, and if it receives 15,000 votes, it is mandatory for the government to consider. Conducting social and communicative work is important not only within the country, but also at the international level. In particular, the UN General Assembly plans to develop an element of e-government while promoting transparency, accountability and effective involvement of citizens in public services. Presently, social networks are the simplest means of obtaining complete statistics on citizens and their preferences (2015). Social networks allow to reduce the costs of interaction between citizens and the state, but in the meantime of costs cutting there is a danger the state will stand aside from communication between citizens. One of the ways to institutionalize social networks in public administration is to create a special government structure and train relevant specialists (Mergel & Bretschneider, 2013). Statistics shows that about 91% of government agencies are registered on Facebook in the United States. At the same time, 71% of the authorities broadcast their activities on Twitter, 50% use YouTube, 22% broadcast via Skype and 17% use Google Docs. Local authorities use social networks not only to inform the population but also to involve citizens in public affairs and work together with the state. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are the channels most involved in informing process. Skype and Google Docs are more often used to interact with public authorities (Freney & Welch, 2016). As for Ukraine, the situation is similar here too. Social networks rank first among electronic tools used by public authorities. According to a poll conducted by the Podolsk Regional Development Agency in a partnership with e-Government Association of Ukraine, 90.8% of the surveyed authorities use social networks as a tool of communication with the public. About 88.6% of respondents use social networks between themselves to carry out communication processes between various authorities. During the poll, citizens were asked to define the term e-democracy as the basic principle of the social networks functioning. The results clearly demonstrate that people do not fully understand the meaning of this word. In particular, 24.6% of respondents believe this is a technology of interaction between the population and the government. Another 17.9% consider e-democracy provides unlimited access to information on official channels on social networks. And 11.9% are convinced that e-democracy is used to create communication between the government and the community in order to initiate certain changes. It can be concluded that the meaning of e-democracy should include the possibility of unimpeded communication with the authorities and the ability of the population to be heard (see Fig.5). Social networks are the most popular tools of e-democracy. Table 2 shows all the tools of public administration based on communication principles. These are official websites of organizations, Google docs, various electronic registers, sites for polls, forums, petitions, etc.



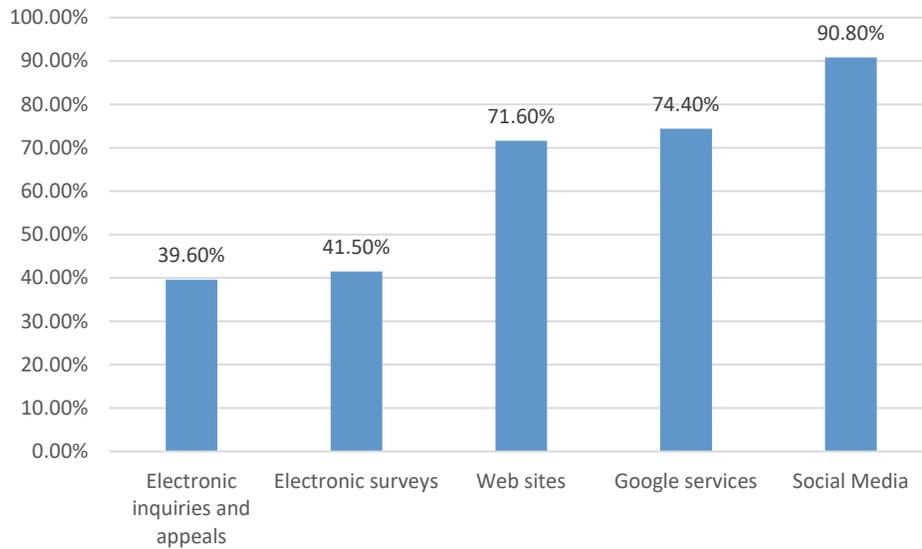
**Fig.5.** Understanding of e-democracy by Ukrainians, %

**Table 2**

E-democracy tools used by government officials in their activity

<b>E-DEMOCRACY TOOLS USED BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THEIR ACTIVITY</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>WEB SITES</b>	71,6%
<b>GOOGLE SERVICES</b>	74,4%
<b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	90,8%
<b>ELECTRONIC REGISTERS</b>	37,3%
<b>ELECTRONIC SURVEYS</b>	41,5%
<b>ELECTRONIC DIGESTS</b>	16,4%
<b>ELECTRONIC FORUMS</b>	22,1%
<b>ELECTRONIC INQUIRIES AND APPEALS</b>	39,6%
<b>E-PETITIONS</b>	31,1%
<b>OTHER</b>	3,7%

Thus, social media, official web sites and Google services are the most popular tools for communication with the audience (See Fig.6.).



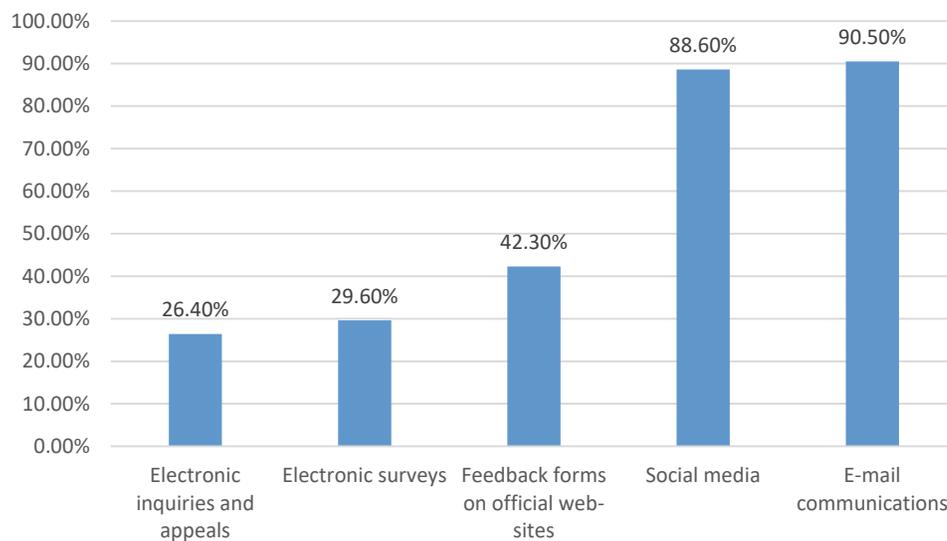
**Fig. 6.** The most popular tools used by Ukrainian government officials in public administration, %

Considering internal communication links that occur within the system of public administration, social networks are used only in 88.6% of cases (Table 3).

**Table 3**

E-democracy tools used by government officials in their internal communications

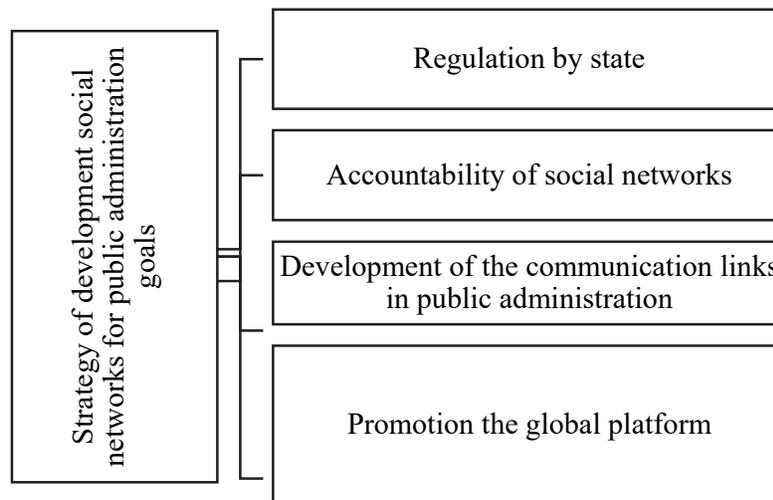
<b>E-DEMOCRACY TOOLS USED BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THEIR ACTIVITY</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>FEEDBACK FORMS ON OFFICIAL WEB-SITES</b>	42,3%
<b>E-MAIL COMMUNICATIONS</b>	90,5%
<b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	88,6%
<b>ELECTRONIC DIGESTS</b>	12,7%
<b>ELECTRONIC FORUMS</b>	21,9%
<b>ELECTRONIC SURVEYS</b>	29,6%
<b>ELECTRONIC INQUIRIES AND APPEALS</b>	26,4%
<b>OTHER</b>	1%



**Fig. 7.** The most popular tools used by Ukrainian government in its internal communications, %

The majority of government officials communicate with each other using e-mail or messengers. The following tools are also used actively enough: feedback forms (42.3%), electronic surveys (29.6%), electronic inquiries and appeals (26.4%), electronic forums (21.9%). Electronic digests are the least used by public organizations to communicate with each other, the figure is only 12.7%. Among the other technologies not mentioned in the questionnaire, respondents also noted e-mailings, TV bridges, webinars and online conferences, partner maps on resource portals. France has clearly stood out in the development of the socio-cultural paradigm of public administration in the field of social networks. This country became the initiator of the pan-European approach in regulating the work of social networks. The policy of regulating social networks must take into account several levels:

- 1) social networks must be regulated by a state, which guarantees the freedom and rights of social network users;
- 2) binding regulation provides for accountability of social networks to independent administrative bodies;
- 3) introduction of communication links between providers, the government, current legislation and society;
- 4) creation of an independent administrative body that will act quickly in cooperation with the state administration;
- 5) creation of global platforms to reduce the level of political risks.



**Fig. 8.** Levels of social networks regulation policy

Governments in many countries understand all the problems of social networks that may appear on the way of democratic development more than ever. There have been many initiatives from various developed countries regarding regulation of the activities of social networks. Some of them can be summarized in Table 4. In accordance with these recommendations, it is planned to implement the following actions.

**Table 4**

Comparison of the current regulation of social networks with the recommended ones

CURRENT REGULATION OF SOCIAL NETWORKS	RECOMMENDED REGULATION OF SOCIAL NETWORKS
NOWADAYS, CONTENT PUBLISHERS USE SHOCKING HEADLINES TO ATTRACT ATTENTION THAT DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THE ESSENCE OF THE CONTENT, WHICH CREATES A BIASED ATTITUDE TO THE EVENT OR PERSON FROM THE FIRST SECOND OF VIEWING THE CONTENT.	All publications should have clear titles that are relevant to the content; the titles should be placed next to the content.
THE MAIN PART OF PUBLICATIONS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS DOES NOT SPECIFY A SOURCE OF INFORMATION. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO SINGLE REGISTER OF RELIABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION, WHICH MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO VERIFY THE DATA ACCURACY.	Confirmation of all publications for authenticity. All materials must be published using the original source.
NOWADAYS, CONTENT IS PROMOTED CHAOTICALLY OR THROUGH TARGETED DISTRIBUTION BY MEDIA AGENCIES THAT CARRY OUT POLITICAL ORDERS.	Content should be promoted by professional media groups; simple technical means should be used to verify the content authenticity.
NOWADAYS, THE PROCEDURE FOR DELETING ACCOUNTS THAT DISSEMINATE FALSE INFORMATION IS QUITE COMPLEX, WHICH DOES NOT ALLOW OPERATIONAL CONTROL OVER THE ACTIVITIES OF SOCIAL NETWORKS.	Development of a mechanism for counteracting accounts that disseminate false information on a large scale, creating the concept of a so-called quarantine.
THE CONCEPT OF MEDIA LITERACY IS USED ONLY BY LARGE MEDIA, WHICH DUPLICATE THE BROADCAST ON SOCIAL MEDIA FROM TV OR THEIR OWN PRINT MEDIA.	Promoting media literacy based on the recognition of reliable sources of information through various tools.

Presently, facing the global threat of the coronavirus, social networks have also changed their measures to regulate information flows. In particular, the founders of social networks are implementing measures to reduce the amount of false information. Some social networks block fake messages, while the others delete accounts that distribute false information. However, the problem with the lack of regulation or "quarantine" of data flows concerns not only the coronavirus, but also other equally important issues of economy, social relations, politics, people's reputations, etc. That's why the ways to develop social networks to improve public administration are pretty clear. They should be based on sorting true and false information as well as improving its quality while preserving the conditions of everyone's freedom.

#### 4. Conclusions

Social and communication processes are important in ensuring democratic values. That's why they are actively used by the government to establish bilateral communication with the population. Practice has shown that social networks are the most convenient tool of communication. The most popular social networks are Facebook and YouTube. Nowadays, about 90% of the authorities use social networks for active communication. The population supports government initiatives and today the majority of information is received by young people through social networks and other Internet channels. Fewer and fewer people choose television to receive information or news. However, along with ensuring the fundamental value of freedom and equality, social networks are not protected from unreliable information and manipulations by various stakeholders. That's why the main directions for the development of social networks in order to improve the communicative processes of public administration are regulation, accountability, increasing the number of involved people and the desire to globalize these technologies.

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