



Mechanisms of State Response to Information Challenges in the Context of National Security

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ABSTRACT

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The article examines the mechanisms of state regulation of the interaction of the mass media and public authorities in Ukraine. The relevance of the topic is due to the need to ensure openness, transparency and accountability of the activities of state institutions, as well as the formation of an independent and responsible media space during the period of transformational development of society and armed conflict. The main problems identified are insufficient funding of independent media, political and oligarchic influence on editorial policy, as well as the instability of the legislative framework and law enforcement practice. The purpose of the study is to analyze the regulatory, institutional, organizational and information and technological mechanisms of interaction between the mass media and public authorities, determine their effectiveness and contribution to the democratic development of the state. The article uses such research methods as content analysis of regulatory acts, comparative analysis of foreign and domestic experience, as well as a systematic approach to assessing the functioning of the media sector. The results of the study showed that effective interaction between the media and the authorities requires a comprehensive approach, which includes legal support for freedom of speech, institutional regulation of media activities, development of information and communication platforms and support for independent journalistic initiatives. Particular attention is paid to the role of international standards in the field of human rights, recommendations of international organizations and financial support for independent media in ensuring pluralism and objectivity of the information space. The proposed recommendations include strengthening legislative regulation, developing organizational and technological mechanisms of communication, improving the professional ethics of journalists, as well as creating favorable conditions for independent media activities. Prospects for further research include assessing the impact of digitalization on the interaction of the state and the media, as well as analyzing the effectiveness of strategies for supporting independent media in the post-conflict period.

KEYWORDS

state regulation, mass media, public authority, freedom of speech, media pluralism, information policy, democratic governance, independent media, information and communication mechanisms, international standards.



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Механізми державного регулювання взаємодії засобів масової інформації та органів публічної влади

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СТАТТЯ

АНОТАЦІЯ

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У статті досліджено механізми державного регулювання взаємодії засобів масової інформації та органів публічної влади в Україні. Актуальність теми зумовлена необхідністю забезпечення відкритості, прозорості та підзвітності діяльності державних інституцій, а також формування незалежного та відповідального медіапростору у період трансформаційного розвитку суспільства та збройного конфлікту. Основними проблемами визначено недостатнє фінансування незалежних медіа, політичний та олігархічний вплив на редакційну політику, а також нестабільність законодавчої бази та правозастосовної практики. Метою дослідження є аналіз нормативно-правових, інституційних, організаційних та інформаційно-технологічних механізмів взаємодії ЗМІ та органів публічної влади, визначення їх ефективності та внесок у демократичний розвиток держави. У статті використано такі методи дослідження, як контент-аналіз нормативно-правових актів, порівняльний аналіз зарубіжного та вітчизняного досвіду, а також системний підхід до оцінки функціонування медіасектора. Результати дослідження показали, що ефективна взаємодія ЗМІ та влади потребує комплексного підходу, який включає правове забезпечення свободи слова, інституційне регулювання діяльності медіа, розвиток інформаційно-комунікаційних платформ та підтримку незалежних журналістських ініціатив. Особливу увагу приділено ролі міжнародних стандартів у сфері прав людини, рекомендацій міжнародних організацій та фінансової підтримки незалежних медіа у забезпеченні плюралізму та об'єктивності інформаційного простору. Запропоновані рекомендації передбачають посилення законодавчого регулювання, розвиток організаційних і технологічних механізмів комунікації, підвищення професійної етики журналістів, а також створення сприятливих умов для незалежної діяльності медіа. Перспективи подальших досліджень охоплюють оцінку впливу цифровізації на взаємодію держави та медіа, а також аналіз ефективності стратегій підтримки незалежних ЗМІ у постконфліктний період.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА

державне регулювання, засоби масової інформації, публічна влада, свобода слова, медіаплюралізм, інформаційна політика, демократичне управління, незалежні медіа, інформаційно-комунікаційні механізми, міжнародні стандарти.

1. Introduction

The media in modern societies is often defined as the “fourth estate”, “the guardian or right hand of democracy”. Television, newspapers, magazines, radio, and Internet portals play a key role in shaping public opinion and political culture. Politicians, being public figures, are constantly under the gun of cameras and microphones, must answer difficult questions and explain their decisions and actions. At the same time, opponents often use information from the media for their own purposes, and high-profile scandals can lead to the termination of the political career of individuals [1, p. 12].

In modern conditions, the media have become an influential force that covers not only the political sphere, but also social relations in general. The use of this influence for the benefit of the state and society requires the formation of an effective information policy and the construction of appropriate mechanisms of interaction between the media and public authorities. Ukraine has chosen a democratic vector of development, which provides for the protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens, ensuring law and order, promoting unity and tolerance, as well as the formation of an active civic position. All elements of the political and social system must act in a coordinated and consistent manner in this direction.

Thus, the study of the mechanisms of state regulation of interaction between the media and public authorities is relevant to ensure transparency, efficiency and democracy of management processes in Ukraine.

2. Literature Review

The interaction of the mass media and public authorities is a complex multi-level social and communication process that reflects the balance between freedom of speech, the right of citizens to access information and the responsibility of the state for the formation of an open information environment. At the same time, the problem is in the focus of research by representatives of various fields of knowledge – sociology, political science, law, public administration and journalism – which indicates its interdisciplinary nature and strategic importance for modern democratic societies.

According to I. Slovka, the mass media perform not only the instrumental function of data transmission, but also form a system of social orientations, model the political behavior of citizens and determine the level of their awareness of the activities of the authorities [14, p. 67]. In this context, the media act as an intermediary between the authorities and society, providing not only a communication, but also a control mechanism that contributes to increasing the accountability of state institutions.

P. Verbytskyi considers the interaction of state bodies and the media as a component of the science of social communications, emphasizing that the effectiveness of communication between the government and society largely depends on the level of development of democratic institutions, the degree of freedom of the press and the availability of legal guarantees for the independence of journalistic activity [4, p. 17–18]. The author emphasizes that in countries with a high level of political culture, the interaction between the authorities and the media is based on the principles of parity, openness and mutual responsibility.

In the works of H. Burtnyk, as well as in the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, there is a tendency to normative consolidation of the principles of access to public information, transparency of the activities of authorities and prevention of censorship as an instrument of political pressure. Such provisions are consistent with European democratic values enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union [15], which emphasizes the need to ensure freedom of expression and the right of citizens to receive reliable information. A comparative analysis of these documents allows us to assess the level of harmonization of Ukrainian legislation with European standards in the field of information policy.

Domestic scientific thought, represented by the works of I. Parubchak, focuses on the problems of openness and transparency in the interaction of the media and authorities. The author substantiates that ensuring the publicity of managerial decisions is a key factor in increasing the level of citizens' trust in state institutions, because information openness contributes to the development of civic activity and public control over the authorities [9, p. 76]. L. Antonova, A. Antonov and L. Ivashova in their works reveal the content and mechanisms of information and communication support of public administration, analyzing the interaction between the government and the media at the levels of state, regional and local structures [1, p. 11].

At the same time, in modern scientific discourse, there is an ambiguity in the interpretation of the boundaries of state regulation of the media. Some researchers emphasize the need for regulatory control as a way to prevent manipulation, disinformation and the spread of fake news; others are on the priority of self-regulation of the industry, which ensures the independence of journalists and the development of high-quality media. The problem is to find the optimal balance between freedom of information activity and the state's responsibility for information security, which is especially relevant in the context of hybrid threats and information wars.

The definition of effective models of interaction between the authorities and the media in the context of democratic reforms in Ukraine remains an actual direction of further research. As O. Yakovenko rightly notes, it is important for Ukrainian conditions to combine the principles of pluralism, freedom of expression and public control with the national interests of the state in the field of information security [16, p. 75]. This approach involves the creation of an institutional model of cooperation, in which state bodies, the journalistic community and public organizations act as equal participants in the process of forming public space.

Thus, the modern paradigm of interaction between the authorities and the media is formed at the intersection of legal, political and communication factors. It requires further theoretical reflection, taking into account international experience, the development of digital technologies, the transformation of the information environment and the growing role of civil society. A systematic approach to the study of this issue will not only clarify the mechanisms for regulating the information space, but will also contribute to the formation of an effective state information policy focused on ensuring transparency, accountability and citizens' trust in the authorities.

3. Problem Statement

The purpose of the study is to scientifically substantiate the mechanisms of state regulation of interaction between the media and public authorities in Ukraine. The main attention is paid to the analysis of interaction models, determining the role of the media in the state and society, as well as the study of national and international legal acts in the field of information rights.

4. Methods and Materials

The study was based on a comprehensive analysis of scientific works, legislative acts, international standards and practices of the functioning of the mass media in interaction with public authorities. The main goal was to study the mechanisms of state regulation of this interaction, their models and effectiveness in ensuring the principles of openness, transparency and accountability of public administration, as well as the influence of historical, social and political factors on the formation of modern communication systems between the authorities and civil society.

To achieve this goal, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. In particular, a content analysis of Ukrainian regulations and international documents, such as the Constitution of Ukraine, the Laws "On Media", "On Television and Radio Broadcasting", "On Access to Public Information", the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, was carried out. The analysis made it possible to assess the content of legislative norms, the mechanisms of their application and the impact on the development of freedom of speech, media pluralism and democratic control over the activities of government bodies.

A comparative analysis of the models of interaction between the media and the state, proposed by foreign scientists (F. Siebert, T. Peterson, V. Schram, D. Gallin, P. Mancini), was used, which made it possible to determine the compliance of Ukrainian practice with international approaches and to highlight the features of the transitional model of democracy. Particular attention was paid to the analysis of the types of state influence on the media, the level of political parallelism, the professional training of journalists and the development of the media market.

To deepen the understanding of the effectiveness of state regulation mechanisms, an analysis of law enforcement practice was carried out, in particular the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights on restrictions on freedom of speech and access to public information. Indicators of press freedom in Ukraine were also monitored on the basis of data from the international non-governmental organization Reporters Without Borders (RSF), which made it possible to assess the impact of economic, political and security factors on the activities of independent media.

Methods of historical and logical-systemic analysis were used to track the evolution of interaction between the media and the authorities in Ukraine – from totalitarian control in the Soviet period to modern democratic approaches based on the principles of pluralism of opinions and socially responsible journalism. The use of structural and functional analysis made it possible to identify the main mechanisms of state regulation, including legislative, administrative, financial, information, communication and control tools, as well as their results and effectiveness at different levels – state, local, public and international.

Thus, the study was based on an integrated approach that combines the analysis of regulatory documents, models of interaction between the media and the authorities, international practice and empirical data on the functioning of the Ukrainian media space. This made it possible to identify the key patterns and problems of state regulation of communication interaction and to form proposals for improving the mechanisms of effective interaction between the media and public authorities.

5. Results and Discussion

In a modern democratic society, the mass media are not only a tool for transmitting news or commentary, but also a significant factor in shaping public opinion, controlling the activities of the authorities, ensuring transparency and accountability of state institutions. The media, according to I. Parubchak, have become an integral part of political and social life, directly influencing the processes of communication between the state and society. That is why the interaction of the mass media with public authorities is considered as an important mechanism for implementing the principles of openness, publicity and accountability of public administration [9, p. 75].

Interaction between the media and public authorities is based on coordinated activities, common goals, professional ethics and high quality of forms of cooperation. At the same time, it is both a way to improve public administration and an indicator of the democratic development of society. According to P. Verbytskyi's research, this interaction is a category of the science of social communications, which combines elements of information policy, political management and public administration [4, p. 18]. However, this cooperation does not always imply a complete coincidence of the positions of the parties – differences in views on certain events or decisions can provoke conflicts, which, however, are constructive and serve as an incentive for improving state policy [1, p. 11].

The information activity of public authorities today is based on communication tools that ensure the effectiveness of management at the state and regional levels. As L. V. Antonova notes, the possession of reliable information and the ability to use it effectively is a strategic managerial resource that allows rationalizing decision-making processes and increasing citizens' trust in the authorities [1, p. 14]. That is why information and communication mechanisms occupy a key place in the structure of public administration, as they contribute to improving the quality of public services, ensure transparency and form a positive image of state institutions.

The basic international document in this area is the European Convention on Human Rights (1950), Article 10 of which proclaims the right of everyone to freedom of expression, receipt and transmission of information without interference by the authorities [5]. At the same time, the document allows for restrictions on freedom of speech in order to protect national security, territorial integrity, public order or the rights of others, but these restrictions must be legally defined and proportionate to the needs of democracy [5]. Similar provisions are contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), Article 19 of which actually reproduces the norms of the Convention [8]. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Article 11) enshrines freedom of information and the principle of media pluralism, which is recognized as one of the cornerstones of a democratic society [15].

In the national context, these standards are implemented in the Constitution of Ukraine, Article 34 of which guarantees the right of every citizen to collect, store, use and disseminate information in any way. At the same time, legal restrictions on this right are provided for to ensure national security, public order, health care or protection of the reputation of other persons [7]. Detailed mechanisms for the implementation of the constitutional right to information are carried out by a number of laws, among which the key ones are: the Law of Ukraine "On Information" [12], "On Citizens' Appeals" [11], "On Access to Public Information" [10] and "On Media" [13].

The Law of Ukraine "On Information" (1992) defines the basics of the state information policy, the procedure for collecting, disseminating, storing and protecting information, as well as the rights and

obligations of subjects of information relations [12]. The Law "On Citizens' Appeals" establishes the procedure for citizens to exercise the right to make proposals to the authorities, to appeal against their decisions or actions, and to raise issues of improving the work of state institutions [11]. Instead, the Law "On Access to Public Information" guarantees the openness of the activities of public authorities, determining the procedure for access to data of public interest [10]. In turn, the adoption of the new Law "On Media" in 2022 was one of the steps towards adapting national legislation to European standards, as the document enshrined the principles of transparency, impartiality, equality and responsibility of the media, as well as normalized the activities National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting [13].

An important element of the mechanisms of state regulation is the law enforcement practice, which is formed on the basis of the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. As H. Burtnik notes, the evolution of the Court's jurisprudence has significantly expanded the interpretation of Article 10 of the Convention, recognizing that the right to freedom of expression also covers the right of access to public information [3, p. 4–5]. In particular, in the case "Hungarian Helsinki Committee v. Hungary" The court formulated the criteria by which the legality of restricting access to information is determined, including the purpose of the request, the nature of the information, the role of the requester and the readiness of the data for publication [3, p. 5]. Thus, the state must ensure a balance between the protection of confidential data and the implementation of the principle of openness of the activities of the authorities.

In democratic political systems, the effectiveness of the functioning of public power largely depends on the mechanisms of interaction with the media, which act as a key tool for communication between the state and the public. Such interaction is based on the principles of openness, transparency and close communication with the population, which ensures timely informing citizens about the activities of the authorities and involving them in decision-making [9, p. 77]. The completeness, reliability and quality of information received by citizens and used for managerial decision-making determines not only the effectiveness of the policy, but also the fairness of its implementation [1, p. 14–15]. We agree with V. Budaev that the media play the role of a controller of the actions of the authorities, contribute to the formation of public opinion and mobilization of the population to active participation in public life through charitable initiatives, petitions, solidarity actions and other forms of public activity [2, p. 124].

Freedom of speech and independence of the media is one of the fundamental principles of a democratic society. The media should be free from the pressure of political elites, able to represent a wide range of opinions and critically evaluate the actions of public authorities. In most democratic countries, censorship is prohibited, while restrictions on freedom of speech are justified only by extreme security needs, the fight against extremism or the protection of state secrets. State interference in the work of the media, censorship or persecution of journalists not only violate the constitutional rights of citizens, but also destabilize the political process and undermine public trust in the authorities [14, p. 68].

Ukraine, as a state with a transitional model of democracy, demonstrates the gradual formation of effective interaction between the authorities and the media. Historically, being part of the USSR, the country had a totalitarian model of control over the media, which provided for strict censorship and restrictions on freedom of speech. With the beginning of independence, the process of transformation began, which continues to this day, aimed at forming a model of interaction based on pluralism of opinions and democratic principles [3, p. 11]. According to the classification of F. Siebert, T. Peterson and V. Schram, Ukraine has gone from totalitarian control to a transitional model of democratic interaction, while according to D. Gallin and P. Munchkini, the modern Ukrainian model is characterized by polarized pluralism, combining the features of independent media and partial control by the state [16, p. 77–78].

In the Ukrainian media space today, the mass media are increasingly involving citizens in the discussion of topical socio-political problems, organizing direct contacts of the population with political figures, representatives of public organizations, state institutions and political parties. The media serve as a tool for informing the public about the management decisions made and the activities of the authorities, as well as create platforms for discussions on state projects and concepts. The use of advanced information technologies and the capabilities of Internet networks significantly accelerates the exchange of information at the national and international levels, increasing the efficiency and accessibility of communication [15, p. 242].

Coordinating the activities of state institutions with the media sector, it is possible to single out the main mechanisms of state regulation that ensure effective interaction between the media and public authorities (Table 1).

Table 1. Main Mechanisms of State Regulation of the Interaction Between the Media and Public Authorities

Mechanism category	Tools	Functions	Examples of application in Ukraine
Legislative	Laws "On Media", "On Television and Radio Broadcasting", regulations on information security	Ensuring legal regulation of media activities, monitoring compliance with standards, protection of journalists	Adoption of the new Law "On Media" in 2023, implementation of EU norms on media pluralism
Administrative	Licensing, state registers, control over compliance with broadcasting rules	Control over media activities, ensuring transparency and reporting	Licensing of television channels by the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting
Financial	Government grants, subsidies, support for independent media	Stimulating the development of independent journalism, supporting regional media	Financial support from the state and international organizations (USAID, EU)
Information / communication	Public Information Platforms, Official Websites of Authorities, Public Consultations	Ensuring citizens' access to information, creating platforms for discussions	Web portals of state institutions, online broadcasts of Verkhovna Rada meetings
Control / supervisory	Inspections, audit, public control, media ombudsman	Monitoring compliance with journalism standards, combating disinformation	Work of the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting, public monitoring projects

Source: Developed by the author.

Globalization processes, in which Ukraine is actively involved, cause profound transformations in all spheres of society, which affects not only the external environment, but also the formation of new social and intellectual guidelines of a person. Only a critically thinking and active person who is able to analyze large amounts of data and make informed decisions is able to navigate in such an information space.

At the same time, to ensure operational control and interaction between the media and authorities, more organizational and institutional mechanisms are used, demonstrating the structure of regulation and actors involved in the communication process (Table 2).

Table 2. Organizational and Institutional Mechanisms of Interaction between the Media and Authorities

Level of interaction	Main subjects	Forms of interaction	Results
State	Cabinet of Ministers, ministries, National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting	Press conferences, official announcements, consultations	Ensuring transparency of decision-making, building citizens' trust
Local	Regional State Administrations, City Councils, Regional Information Departments	Information portals, public meetings, public hearings	Raising the level of awareness of the local population, involvement in decision-making
Public	NGOs, journalistic associations, media activists	Monitoring, petitions, publications in the media	Control over the activities of the authorities, formation of public opinion
International	EU, OSCE, international NGOs (RSF, USAID)	Recommendations, grants, technical assistance	Promoting media regulation reforms, supporting independent media

Source: Developed by the author.

An equally important component of effective interaction between the media and the state is the legislative regulation of the rights and obligations of journalists. The Ukrainian regulatory framework is based on democratic principles, but its improvement remains an urgent task [4, p. 25–26]. The

professional community draws attention to the influence of business structures and political bodies on the editorial policy of the media, which sometimes leads to information manipulation and distortion of public opinion. In addition, the information field is formed under the influence of the interests of certain financial and political groups, which negatively affects the objectivity and reliability of public information. To overcome these problems, it is proposed to develop public broadcasting, independent of the state and oligarchic influence, avoid monopolization of the media space, broadcast democratic values and build a socially responsible model of interaction between the media and authorities [1, p. 16].

As G. Kyrychenko rightly points out, the media play a key role in the formation of value orientations of both individual citizens and society as a whole. At the same time, they reflect public opinion and actively influence its formation [6, p. 48–49]. Ideally, the media should serve as a link between the state and civil society, helping to balance the interests of the government and the population. If the media contribute to the implementation of democratic principles and increase the role of civil society in the political process, it can be stated that there are signs of a developed democracy [16, p. 79].

In Ukraine, the mass media are often involved in political struggles between different political forces, which gives political communication a contradictory character and causes a certain disintegration of society. Part of the media is under state control, which determines their biased attitude to the authorities, while others belong to individuals or political groups, which also affects the quality of information products [14, p. 69].

As of 2024, Ukraine has risen to 61st place in the World Press Freedom Index, which is published annually by the international non-governmental organization Reporters Without Borders (RSF). This improvement is significant compared to the 79th position in 2023 and reflects progress in ensuring freedom of speech and media pluralism in the face of the ongoing armed aggression by the Russian Federation [17].

At the same time, despite this increase, the situation in the Ukrainian media environment remains difficult and requires systemic changes. According to RSF, more than 90% of Ukrainian newsrooms are supported by subsidies, including international aid, including from USAID. The lack of such sources of funding jeopardizes independent coverage of the war and effective counteraction to information disinformation [17].

In 2025, Ukraine slightly dropped to 62nd place in the RSF ranking. This decline is due to the economic difficulties of the media sector, in particular due to the lack of stable funding and a reduction in advertising revenues. Systematic attacks on journalists, especially in the occupied territories, where a significant part of Ukrainian media workers are missing, remain additional challenges [17].

Thus, although Ukraine demonstrates some positive developments in the field of press freedom, the existing economic and security threats continue to pose significant risks to the development of independent media and the effective functioning of the state's information space. Taking these factors into account is critical for the development of national and international strategies to support the Ukrainian media sector in the context of military conflict and post-conflict stabilization.

Thus, the mechanisms of state regulation of interaction between the media and public authorities in Ukraine are formed on the basis of the constitutional principles of freedom of speech, openness and publicity, as well as on international standards in the field of human rights. They include regulatory, institutional, communication and information technology components aimed at ensuring the effective functioning of a democratic state. Further development of this interaction requires an integrated approach, which involves coordinating the interests of the state, society and the media sector, improving the legislative framework, increasing the level of information culture of officials and creating a favorable environment for free, independent and responsible journalism.

6. Conclusions

The study of the mechanisms of state regulation of interaction between the media and public authorities in Ukraine has shown that effective communication between the state and the media is a key factor in the development of a democratic society. The mass media play the role of not only informant of citizens, but also of the controller of the actions of the authorities, contributing to the formation of public opinion and active participation of the population in public life.

Interaction between the media and public authorities is based on the principles of openness, transparency and professional ethics. Legislative, organizational, information and communication

mechanisms provide a legal basis for media activities, citizens' access to information, control over compliance with standards and the creation of platforms for policy discussion.

Despite the positive results achieved, challenges related to the economic dependence of the media, the influence of political and business structures, security risks and the need to improve the legislative framework remain. An important task is the development of independent public broadcasting, increasing the professional competence of journalists and officials, as well as the introduction of modern digital platforms for open communication with citizens.

Further development of mechanisms of interaction between the media and authorities will contribute to strengthening citizens' trust in state institutions, increasing the transparency of governance and the effective implementation of democratic principles in society. Effective state regulation of this interaction is a complex process that combines legal, institutional, information and communication elements and ensures a balance of interests of the state, the media and citizens.

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