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RISKS OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS AND MECHANISMS FOR THEIR REGULATION UNDER MARTIAL LAW CONDITIONS

The article is devoted to the analysis of information communication risks and mechanisms for their regulation under martial law in Ukraine. The relevance of the study is determined by unprecedented challenges to state information security caused by Russian armed aggression and large-scale hybrid warfare. The article examines the specifics of information space transformation under martial law conditions, identifies critical risks for the functioning of the public administration system and national security of Ukraine. Particular attention is paid to analyzing legal restrictions on access to public information established by martial law legislation and their impact on the balance between state security and observance of citizens' constitutional rights.

The role of strategic communications as a key tool for countering information threats in armed conflict conditions is revealed. Mechanisms for coordinating information policy between state authorities, military command and mass media are analyzed. The experience of organizing a unified information space to ensure reliable public information, counter disinformation and preserve society's moral and psychological resilience is examined. The main challenges in crisis communications are identified: the need for rapid response to information attacks, ensuring information security of critical infrastructure, and coordination of actions between different subjects of information policy. Recommendations are formulated for improving mechanisms of state regulation of

information communications under martial law conditions, based on principles of transparency, efficiency, adaptability and coordination. The necessity of building institutional capacity of public authorities in strategic communications, increasing media literacy of the population and forming resilience of Ukraine's information space to hybrid threats is substantiated.

Keywords: *martial law, information communications, risks, strategic communications, crisis communications, information security, public administration, disinformation, hybrid warfare.*

Problem Statement and Its Connection with Relevant Scientific and Practical Tasks. The introduction of martial law in Ukraine on February 24, 2022, as a result of the full-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation, fundamentally changed the conditions for the functioning of information communications in the public administration system. According to the Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law," the state received the right to temporarily restrict the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens, including the right to access information, which necessitated finding a new balance between national security requirements and principles of democratic governance. The information space has become an arena of active confrontation, where alongside traditional military operations, an unprecedented large-scale information war is unfolding, aimed at demoralizing society, undermining trust in state institutions, and destabilizing the socio-political situation. Under these conditions, information communication risks acquire a critical character, as mistakes in information policy can have consequences comparable to defeats on the battlefield.

The specificity of martial law lies in the need to simultaneously solve two contradictory tasks: on one hand, ensuring state information security through restricting access to information that could be used by the adversary; on the other hand, maintaining citizens' trust in authorities through transparent and open communication. Public authorities face challenges of rapid response to disinformation campaigns, coordination

of information policy between different agencies, and ensuring uninterrupted operation of communication channels under conditions of damaged critical infrastructure. Traditional mechanisms of state regulation of the information sphere, developed for peacetime, prove insufficiently effective in the face of hybrid threats that combine cyber attacks, propaganda campaigns, social media manipulations, and deliberate spreading of panic.

At the same time, the experience of the first years of martial law has demonstrated the critical importance of effective strategic communications for mobilizing society's internal resources and forming international support for Ukraine. The coordination of information efforts by the state, civil society, and media community has become one of the key factors of national resilience. This actualizes the need for scientific understanding of mechanisms for regulating information communications under martial law conditions, identifying specific risks, and developing recommendations for their minimization, taking into account the requirements of both national security and democratic values for which Ukrainian society is fighting.

Analysis of Recent Domestic and Foreign Research. The problem of information communications under martial law conditions has become the subject of active scientific understanding since the beginning of the full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine. The fundamental theoretical foundations of communication functioning under crisis conditions are revealed in the monograph "Strategic Communications in Hybrid Warfare: From Volunteer to Scholar Perspective" edited by L. Kompantseva [4], which summarizes Ukraine's experience in countering hybrid aggression and proposes technologies for asymmetric responses to information threats. Practical aspects of organizing strategic communications for security and state institutions are detailed in the corresponding practical guide [3], which has become an important tool for security and defense sector specialists.

The legal foundations for the functioning of the information space under martial law conditions are defined by the Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law" [1], which establishes the limits of possible restrictions on constitutional rights and

freedoms of citizens, including the right to access information. The Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the Introduction of Martial Law in Ukraine" [2] and the Decree "On the Implementation of Unified Information Policy under Martial Law" [5] created the organizational and legal basis for coordinating state information efforts under armed aggression conditions. Strategic guidelines for information sphere development are defined by the Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine [6], where public diplomacy as a component of strategic communications is identified as an important tool for forming Ukraine's positive image.

Practical aspects of organizing public information under martial law conditions were studied by V. Barabash and O. Kolomiets [7], who analyzed the activities of cultural and information centers and their role in supporting civic activism and patriotism. The theoretical framework for understanding the transformation of communication processes is provided by M. Castells' concept of communication power [8], which explains the mechanisms of information flows' influence on public consciousness and political processes in network society conditions.

However, despite the significant body of research, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis of specific risks of information communications precisely under martial law conditions and mechanisms for their regulation, taking into account the need to balance state security needs and democratic values. Issues of crisis communication coordination between different subjects of information policy, mechanisms for countering disinformation under conditions of limited access to information, and institutional foundations for forming information space resilience to hybrid threats remain insufficiently studied.

The objective of the article is to analyze specific risks of information communications under martial law conditions and substantiate mechanisms for their state regulation, taking into account the balance between national security requirements and adherence to democratic principles of public administration. Research tasks: identify critical risks of information communications under martial law conditions; analyze

mechanisms for coordinating state information policy; formulate recommendations for improving the strategic communications system to counter hybrid threats.

Presentation of Main Research Material with Full Justification of Obtained Scientific Results. The transformation of the information space under martial law conditions occurs under the influence of two interrelated processes: on one hand, the need to ensure state information security through establishing legal restrictions on access to certain categories of information; on the other hand, the need to maintain public trust in state institutions through transparent and prompt communication. The Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law" defines the legal foundations for the activities of state authorities under special conditions, providing for the possibility of temporary restrictions on constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens with specification of the duration of these restrictions [1]. This legal construct creates the foundation for regulating information communications, but its practical implementation requires a balanced approach that takes into account both security needs and democratic values.

The introduction of martial law by the Decree of the President of Ukraine dated February 24, 2022 [2] introduced a number of restrictions on the dissemination of information that could be used by the adversary to harm the state's defense capabilities. In particular, a ban was established on disclosure of information about the direction and movement of weapons and ammunition to Ukraine, the movement and deployment of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other military formations. These restrictions are justified from the standpoint of military necessity, but create new challenges for the functioning of the public administration system, which in a democratic society must be based on the principles of openness and accountability. M. Castells in his theory of communication power emphasizes that control over information flows is a key tool for shaping public opinion and legitimizing political decisions [8]. Under martial law conditions, this control acquires special significance, as the information space becomes a field of active confrontation between the state and the aggressor. The Russian Federation systematically

uses disinformation as a weapon aimed at demoralizing Ukrainian society, undermining trust in authorities, and weakening international support for Ukraine.

The practical implementation of information restrictions faces numerous challenges. Local governments in the first months of martial law often resorted to excessive restrictions on access to public information, closing entire sections of official websites or refusing to provide responses to citizens' information requests. Such practice, although motivated by security concerns, actually led to a violation of the balance between information protection and citizens' right to access information about the activities of authorities. Gradually, throughout 2022, the situation began to normalize: public authorities restored part of the information on their resources and developed more balanced approaches to determining the limits of information restrictions. V. Barabash and O. Kolomiets in their study of cultural and information centers' activities under martial law note that these institutions played an important role in supporting civic activism and forming patriotism through organizing information events that helped the population navigate the difficult conditions of war [7].

The experience of full-scale war has demonstrated the critical importance of strategic communications for ensuring national resilience. L. Kompantseva and co-authors define strategic communications as coordinated and purposeful activities of state institutions aimed at promoting national interests through synchronization of words and actions [3]. Under martial law conditions, this function acquires special significance, as effective communications become a tool not only for informing, but also for mobilizing society, forming international support, and countering enemy propaganda. The Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the Implementation of Unified Information Policy under Martial Law" dated March 19, 2022, established the organizational and legal foundations for coordinating state information efforts [5]. This document introduced mechanisms for centralized management of information policy, which made it possible to avoid contradictory messages from various state bodies and ensure narrative unity in communication with both internal and international audiences.

The Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine defines public diplomacy as a component of strategic communications and an important tool for forming Ukraine's positive image as a reliable partner and outpost of democratic values protection [6]. This strategic guidance acquired special relevance under war conditions, when international support for Ukraine became a critical factor of national security. The state's communication efforts aimed at international audiences include not only official statements and diplomatic activity, but also work with international media, organizing visits of foreign journalists, conducting information campaigns on social networks, and involving civil society in forming a positive narrative about Ukraine. The President of Ukraine plays a key role in international strategic communications; his regular addresses to the Ukrainian people and speeches before international audiences have become an important tool for maintaining the nation's morale and ensuring international solidarity.

The monograph "Strategic Communications in Hybrid Warfare: From Volunteer to Scholar Perspective" summarizes Ukraine's unique experience in countering information threats and proposes technologies for asymmetric responses to hybrid aggression [4]. The authors emphasize the need to integrate strategic communications into all aspects of state activity, from military operations to social policy. An important conclusion of the study is that effective strategic communications cannot be limited exclusively to information campaigns – they must be based on real actions that confirm words. The principle "said – done" becomes the basis of trust of both internal and external audiences in Ukrainian institutions.

Coordination of information policy between various state authorities remains one of the key problems in organizing communications under martial law conditions. Military command, executive authorities, local government, parliament – all these institutions have their own communication functions, and without proper coordination there is a risk of contradictory messages appearing, which undermines trust in state information. Creating coordination mechanisms, defining clear powers and responsibilities, establishing

interaction protocols between different subjects of information policy are critically important tasks for ensuring the effectiveness of strategic communications.

Special attention deserves the problem of interaction between state authorities and mass media under martial law conditions. On one hand, independent media are an important tool for controlling the activities of authorities and ensuring citizens' right to access information. On the other hand, under war conditions there is a need to coordinate information efforts to counter enemy propaganda and prevent the dissemination of information that could harm the state's defense capabilities. Finding a balance between these two requirements is a complex task that requires constant dialogue between authorities and the media community, developing common rules and ethical standards for journalistic activity under war conditions.

Crisis communications under martial law conditions acquire special significance, as the state constantly faces situations requiring prompt and effective information response. Missile strikes, damage to critical infrastructure, population evacuation, humanitarian crises – all these situations require immediate communication with citizens, providing clear information about threats, instructions for action, coordination between different services. The practical guide on strategic communications for security and state institutions provides specific recommendations on organizing crisis communications, including creating crisis headquarters, developing communication protocols, preparing spokespersons, monitoring the information space, and promptly responding to disinformation [3].

Countering disinformation is one of the most difficult challenges for state information policy under martial law conditions. The Russian Federation systematically uses disinformation campaigns to achieve its strategic goals: demoralizing Ukrainian society, undermining trust in authorities, weakening international support for Ukraine, provoking internal conflicts. These campaigns are characterized by a high level of coordination, use of sophisticated technologies for disseminating information through social networks, creation of fake news resources, involvement of information agents of

influence. Effective counteraction requires a comprehensive approach that combines technological tools for detecting and blocking disinformation, legal mechanisms for holding accountable those who spread fakes, educational programs on media literacy for the population, and active work of fact-checking organizations.

An important aspect of regulating information communications under martial law conditions is ensuring cybersecurity of state information infrastructure. Cyberattacks on state information systems, attempts at unauthorized access to confidential information, DDoS attacks on official web resources – all this creates additional risks for the functioning of the public administration system. Protection of critical information infrastructure, ensuring uninterrupted operation of government communication channels, protection of citizens' personal data become priority tasks under conditions when cyberspace is one of the fields of active hostilities.

The role of civil society and volunteer organizations in the field of information communications under martial law conditions cannot be overestimated. Numerous initiatives in fact-checking, monitoring disinformation, creating alternative sources of information, supporting media literacy of the population have become an important addition to state efforts. Interaction between state institutions and civil society organizations in the field of strategic communications demonstrates a synergistic effect, when coordination of efforts multiplies their effectiveness [4]. The state must create conditions for the development of independent media and civic initiatives in the information sphere, ensure their protection from persecution, and promote the professional development of journalists and communication specialists.

Media literacy of the population becomes a critically important factor of national resilience under information warfare conditions. Citizens' ability to critically evaluate information, recognize disinformation, verify sources, understand manipulation mechanisms – all these skills are a necessary condition for the effectiveness of any state efforts in the field of strategic communications. Educational programs on media literacy, information campaigns on safe behavior in digital space, teaching critical thinking should

become an integral part of state information policy. Special attention should be paid to youth, who are the most active audience of social networks and at the same time the most vulnerable to manipulative influences.

The international dimension of Ukraine's strategic communications under martial law conditions is of exceptional importance for ensuring national security. Forming international support, countering Russian propaganda at the global level, ensuring objective coverage of events in Ukraine in world media, attracting international partners to assist Ukraine – all these tasks require professional, coordinated and strategically balanced communication efforts. The Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine defines public diplomacy as a key tool for achieving foreign policy goals [6], which acquires special relevance under conditions when the information front is no less important than the military one.

Prospects for the development of mechanisms for regulating information communications under martial law conditions are associated with the gradual institutionalization of best practices developed during the war. Creating specialized strategic communications units in all state authorities, training professional personnel, developing standards and protocols for communication activities, implementing monitoring and evaluation systems for communication effectiveness – all these measures should ensure the long-term capacity of the state to function effectively under information challenges. At the same time, it is critically important to maintain a balance between security needs and democratic values, preventing excessive restriction of freedom of speech and the right to access information under the pretext of military necessity.

Conclusions. The conducted research has established that the risks of information communications under martial law conditions have a complex and multidimensional character, encompassing legal, organizational, technological and socio-psychological aspects of the public administration system's functioning. Analysis of the regulatory framework, in particular the Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law" and corresponding decrees of the President of Ukraine, has shown that Ukrainian legislation

creates a basic legal framework for regulating information communications under special conditions, but the practical implementation of these norms requires a constant search for balance between national security requirements and adherence to democratic principles of openness and accountability of authorities. The experience of the first years of full-scale war has demonstrated the critical importance of strategic communications as a tool for ensuring national resilience, mobilizing society and forming international support for Ukraine.

It has been established that effective regulation of information communications under martial law conditions requires an integrated approach that combines centralized coordination of state information policy with active involvement of civil society, independent media and volunteer initiatives. Mechanisms for countering disinformation should be based not on restrictive measures, but on forming media literacy of the population, developing fact-checking organizations, and ensuring transparency and promptness of state communications. Coordination between different subjects of information policy – military command, executive authorities, local government, parliament – remains a key challenge requiring clear delineation of powers, establishment of interaction protocols and regular monitoring of communication efforts' effectiveness.

Prospects for further scientific research in this direction are associated with in-depth study of mechanisms for adapting strategic communication practices developed under martial law conditions to peacetime needs, taking into account the necessity of preserving democratic standards of information space functioning. The study of international experience of countries that have gone through similar trials and possibilities of its adaptation to the Ukrainian context is relevant. The issue of institutionalizing the strategic communications function in the public administration system, developing professional standards for communication specialists, creating systems for training and professional development of civil servants in this field requires further scientific substantiation. An important direction is research on the impact of technological innovations, particularly artificial intelligence and new digital communication platforms, on the transformation of

information space risks and development of appropriate regulatory mechanisms taking into account cybersecurity requirements and protection of citizens' personal data.

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