

ABSCHNITT IV. MANAGEMENT, ÖFFENTLICHE VERWALTUNG UND ADMINISTRATION

DOI 10.36074/logos-31.03.2023.06

INTERNET ENVIRONMENT AS A TOOL FOR FORMING NETOCRATIC PUBLIC GOVERNANCE

ORCID ID: 0000-0003-2766-3712

Lina Storozhenko

Ph.D. in Philology, Associate Professor
State University of Telecommunications

UKRAINE

In the conditions of the information society, modern political, economic, cultural, social life is acquiring a new vector of development, in which network communication is the most important factor in the formation of a new type of society, which, thanks to horizontal communication on the Internet, becomes independent of state power in information and communication aspects.

Social networks retain significant potential to meet the needs and interests of a person, including the ability to influence the adoption and implementation of socially important decisions. Today, the virtual network environment is a powerful tool for the formation of netocratic management as the latest form of public administration, designed to develop a horizontal management structure that is replacing vertical management ties.

This is emphasized by the apologists of netocracy O. Bard and J. Zoderqvist in their work «Netocracy. The New Power Elite and Life after Capitalism. In particular, the authors note that the existence of a virtual network is a fact that cannot be ignored, since «the Internet is something completely new, a means by which almost any person, after a relatively small investment in equipment and with a few simple actions, can become both a creator and a consumer of information. <...> It is hard to imagine something more powerful. Online, our freedom of expression is colossal, and the audience is huge. With a simple push of a button, any information becomes available, and the scale of development of this communication tool is unparalleled. <...> From now on, the media took on a life of their own, forming the basis for a new power structure, and began to increasingly acquire the characteristics of the information society paradigm and its ruling class – netocracy. <...> Mass media have assumed the role of curators of the political arena, and thus exercise total control over political processes in the information society, in full accordance with the principles of netocracy. <...> As a result of the transition from capitalism to the information society, the authorities leave the salons of the bourgeoisie and move into the virtual world, where the hands of the new elite, the netocracy, are ready» [1, p. 75–76, 104].

The virtualization of government institutions, the appearance on the Internet sites of government bodies, the pages of leading statesmen in social networks testify not only to the attempts of the «old» management system to use the network in their own interests and the ability to use it to provide an imitation of openness to dialogue, but proves the formation «new» form of public administration, namely, netocratic.

As a result, society got the opportunity to realize itself as a subject of power, which allows it to actively participate in managerial decision-making. In addition, the following positions can be attributed to important aspects of the influence of the virtual network environment on the formation of netocratic public administration:

- democratization of public administration: the use of a virtual network helps to increase the transparency and openness of government activities and helps to improve the quality of decisions made, reduces corruption risks;
- public administration efficiency: virtual tools make the public administration process more efficient, reducing the time and resources spent on collecting and processing information;
- accessibility and speed of obtaining information: Internet platforms (e-petitions, e-consultations, e-dopomoha, etc.) ensure the availability and speed of collecting information, contribute to greater activity of citizens and attract a wider audience to discussions and decision-making;
- information exchange: the creation of virtual platforms and tools facilitates the rapid and convenient exchange of information between citizens and government bodies;
- openness and transparency: The Internet environment provides open and transparent public administration, increasing the availability and access to information of every citizen.

The virtual network environment is a powerful tool in the formation of netocratic public administration and the transformation of modern democratic processes by involving the public in interaction with government bodies to make managerial decisions. Modern information and communication technologies open up new horizons, leveling temporary, remote, national, language barriers [2, p. 197–198], and forming a new social reality.

References:

- [1] Bard, A., Soderqvist, J. (2002). *Netocracy. The New Power Elite and Life after Capitalism*. London: Pearson Education.
 - [2] Storozhenko, L. (2023). Netocracy as a form of information society management. *Periodyk Naukowy Akademii Polonijnej*, (55/6), 194–199.
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