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Information and Communication Policy in Wartime: the Case of Ukraine

Polityka informacyjna i komunikacyjna w okresie wojny na przykładzie Ukrainy

• Abstract •

Information and communication policy aims to build effective, harmonious communication between all actors of the democratic process with extensive use of ICTs and direct communication. The war creates an aggressive environment, which also affects the communication processes in the information sphere of the state, in particular, there is more emphasis on information, less – on deliberation. The article examines the tools used by Ukraine's state and non-state structures to: 1) objectively inform the citizens and avoid panic, 2) inform the world community about the war and intensify international support for Ukraine, 3) fight Kremlin fakes and convey reality to the RF citizens. The specifics of TV broadcasting in Ukraine during the war, media activity of officials, social pages and Telegram channels of ministries, the Armed Forces, the Office of the President, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, public organizations fighting against disinformation and fakes are analyzed. It is found out that the chosen information and communication policy is efficient at the national level (mobilized citizens to fight for victory, reduced panic, increased awareness and criticism of

• Abstrakt •

Polityka informacyjna i komunikacyjna ma na celu budowanie efektywnej, zharmonizowanej komunikacji pomiędzy wszystkimi aktorami procesu demokratycznego przy wykorzystaniu na szeroką skalę technologii informacyjno-komunikacyjnych i komunikacji bezpośredniej. Wojna stwarza agresywne środowisko, którego wpływ obejmuje również procesy komunikacyjne w sferze informacyjnej państwa – większy nacisk kładzie się na przepływ informacji, mniejszy na ich rozważanie. Artykuł analizuje narzędzia wykorzystywane przez struktury państwowe i niepaństwowe Ukrainy, aby: 1) obiektywnie informować obywateli i unikać paniki, 2) informować społeczność światową o wojnie i zintensyfikować międzynarodowe wsparcie dla Ukrainy, 3) zwalczać dezinformację Kremla i opisywać rzeczywistość obywatelom Federacji Rosyjskiej. Analizowana jest specyfika nadawania programów telewizyjnych na Ukrainie w czasie wojny, aktywność medialna urzędników, portale społecznościowe oraz kanały Telegram ministerstw, Sił Zbrojnych, Kancelarii Prezydenta, Rady Najwyższej Ukrainy, organizacji publicznych walczących z dezinformacją i *fake newsami*. Okazuje się, że obrany kierunek polityki

fakes) and at the “western” level (international moral, financial and military support to Ukraine, sanctions against Russia). However, the work in the information space of the Russian Federation is problematic because it is exposed to fierce opposition by the objects of Russian propaganda.

informacyjnej i komunikacyjnej jest skuteczny na poziomie krajowym (mobilizacja obywateli do walki o zwycięstwo, zmniejszenie paniki, wzrost świadomości i krytycznego nastawienia wobec *fake newsów*) oraz na „froncie” zachodnim (międzynarodowe wsparcie moralne, finansowe i militarne dla Ukrainy, sankcje wobec Rosji). Praca w przestrzeni informacyjnej Federacji Rosyjskiej stwarza jednak problemy, gdyż narażona jest na zaciekle sprzeciw ze strony obiektu rosyjskiej propagandy, tj. zwykłych Rosjan.

Keywords: information and communication policy; wartime; media; fakes; destructive information activity

Słowa kluczowe: polityka informacyjna i komunikacyjna; wojna; media; *fake newsy*; destrukcyjna działalność informacyjna

Introduction

In the modern information society people are thirsty for information and in the period of war this dependency increases even more. To assist citizens in their search for necessary information during war the Ministries may open free hot-lines, special non-governmental structures may be established, the access to media and information may be provided owing to new information technologies, etc. The balanced, well-thought-out information and communication policy contributes to the harmonization of relations, mutual understanding between the authority and citizens, as well as to unity for joint counteraction to the enemy in such an emotionally explosive period as war. For the authority, communication and broadcasting to the public in times of danger is a sign of political power.

On February 24, 2022, Russia waged war against Ukraine.

The research aim is to analyze the information and communication policy tools used by Ukraine’s ruling elite and non-governmental structures to harmonize relations with the domestic and foreign public. In particular, the following tasks have been identified: to present an outlook of understanding the essence of information and communication policy in wartime; to analyze the tools used by the authority and non-governmental organizations to support the Ukrainians and to counter the destructive information influences of the Russian Federation at the national and regional as well as international levels during the war.

The research period covers the first 40 days of war (from February 24, 2022 till April 5, 2022); it is the time when urgent, intensive and extensive information and communication activity was needed. The author has conducted daily monitoring

of the Ukraine's information space. The paper analyzes the content of the official information sources, namely news reports of the biggest national TV broadcasters, Facebook pages of the *Office of the President, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, State Emergency Service of Ukraine, Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories, Center for Strategic Communications and Information Security, Center for Counteracting Disinformation, Stratcom of the Armed Forces* as well as non-governmental structures: the *Information Troops of Ukraine, StratCom Ukraine, #Yaknestatyovochem Initiative*; Telegram channels of the *Armed Forces Stratcom, Information Troops, Center for Countering Disinformation, Media Detector*, channels of V. Zelenskiy, D. Kuleba, P. Klimkin, P. Poroshenko, etc. Diversity of official and unofficial sources made it possible to compare the content and define the specificity of the Ukraine's information and communication policy during 40 days of war.

The article consists of the following semantic parts: the introduction substantiates the aim, objectives, methodological basis of the study; the next section outlines the theoretical background of the main research concept of "information and communication policy in wartime"; the next two sections analyze the tools used by Ukraine to combat destructive influence at the national level, at the European and Western levels, and at the level of the RF; the conclusions summarize the results of the study.

The specificity of information and communication policy in wartime

Information and communication are interdependent concepts, two sides of the same process, so information and communication policies are also interconnected and complementary. M. Brüggemann (2005) interprets information policy as: 1) providing or denying information, 2) responding to requests or proactively informing citizens, 3) guaranteeing the right to information, 4) advertising or explaining political decisions, 5) concentrating information in the information office or disseminating it to government agencies. Information policy arises from the need of the state, society and the individual to respond to processes within the country and abroad. Therefore, the state information policy includes the efforts of the state, society and the individual, which are a response to the processes in the global, interstate, national, regional and local spaces (Karpchuk, 2015).

The World Congress on Communication for Development defines communication as a social process based on dialogue using a wide variety of tools and methods; it seeks for changes at the level of listening, building trust, disseminating knowledge and skills, developing policies, discussing and learning for sustainable

and conscious change (The Rome Consensus..., 2007). J. Habermas (2000) claimed that communication is developed at the level of intersubjective attitude to man as a partner, it paves the way for consensus, which arises as a result of reasoned speech. N. Luhmann (1992) considered communication the most important element of the social system. K. Deutsch came to the conclusion that communication processes are the basis of cohesion of societies, cultures and even individuals; any cooperation of human beings requires communication, and the more organized a society is, the greater the need for communication. There should be a center or a leading group in the society with a high level of communication. Members of the community are connected to the center and the leading group by an inseparable chain of connections and communications (Deutsch, 1953).

Taking into account the interconnectedness, sometimes even contiguity, of the concepts of “information policy” and “communication policy”, the author considers it appropriate to present the concept in the form of “information and communication policy”.

The issue of information, communication, media coverage, propaganda in war was researched in a number of publications, namely: 1) in *Propaganda and Conflict: War, Media and Shaping the Twentieth Century*, the authors explore the changing interactions of media, propaganda and diplomacy and demonstrate that the media can shape public opinion which politicians fear (Connelly et al., 2019); 2) S. Aday (2017) analyzed the relations between the news media and US foreign policy with particular emphasis on war; 3) G.S. Jowett (1987) examined propaganda from a historical perspective; 4) the authors of *Communication and Culture in War and Peace* (Roach, 1993) analyzed myths of war and in war, communication and culture in peacetime and in war; 5) in *War, Media and Propaganda: A Global Perspective*, D. Miller claims that in wartime “the ‘unfriendly’ information should be destroyed, wherever it comes from” (Miller, 2004, p. 11); 6) J. Winters and J. Giffin argue that “ability to deny, degrade, destroy and/or effectively blind enemy capabilities” is of utmost importance (Winters & Giffin, 1997); 7) *Munitions of the Mind* suggests that in a nuclear age, peace propagandists, not war propagandists are of utmost importance, i.e., people whose job is to increase communication, understanding and dialogue between different peoples with different beliefs (Taylor, 2013), etc.

In the research on the specifics of communications during the war, the key concept is “propaganda” being understood as “the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve the desired intent of the propagandist” (Jowett & O’Donnell, 1999, p. 4). Propaganda attempts to solely advance the interests of the propagandist and shows disregard for advantages to be gained by the receivers during this communication process.

However, in wartime, all modern communication activities of a democratic state are not limited to propaganda only and cover a much wider range of information activities focused on the support of citizens and support from citizens. Thus, “information and communication policy in wartime” can be treated as the management of information flows by the initiator of influence (President, state authorities, NGOs, civil society, the Armed Forces, etc.) in order to transmit objective, verified information to domestic and foreign public, to prevent and counteract the destructive information influences of the enemy, to build trust and public support for the political leadership of the state and the Armed Forces, to unite the entire society for a common struggle for victory. The tools of information and communication policy include the media, social networks, messengers, specially created communication bodies and structures of the state level, and public organizations.

Ukraine’s counteraction: national level

Media are “the eyes” of the world so they should provide verified, objective information about the reality. It is for the sake of truthful information that in the first days of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine the editors of *Suspilne*, *Rada*, *Inter*, *ICTV*, *1+1* and *Ukraina 24* united and launched a joint information marathon “United News” (#UАразом) under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine. Their slogan is, “In unity there is strength”. Now the channels alternate on the air every 6 hours a day, preparing separate blocks. The Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Security and Defense Council (NSDC), the Office of the President of Ukraine and other government agencies are involved in creating the news. Since March 7, the *United News Marathon* has had an English-language track.

There are also other opportunities to receive the news of the *United News Marathon*: free access to major national TV channels (*UA:Pershiy*, *1+1*, *ICTV*, *Inter*, *Ukraina*, *Rada*, *UNIAN TV* are available for free in *YouTV*, *SweetTV*, *OmegaTV*, *MEGOGO*, *KyivstarTV*, *1+1 video*, *Olltv*); most TV channels have their own YouTube channels and also broadcast on their own websites; one can listen to the TV marathon via the Internet radio *radioplayer.ua*, provided that the appropriate application is installed; in the application *Diya* (Action) (public services online) there is a section *Diya TV*.

According to the survey conducted by the sociological group Rating at the end of March 2022, the war has changed the weight of ways to obtain information: central television dominates among the sources, including the news marathon (62%); the second position is occupied by channels in messengers (42%); the share of social

networks decreased (37%; in November 2021 it was 49%) (*Shoste zahal'nonatsional'ne opytuvannya...*, 2022).

Since the proclamation of independence in 1991, a number of pro-Kremlin parties have been active in Ukraine as agents of influence. These parties had great support in eastern and southern parts of Ukraine and dominated the Verkhovna Rada under V. Yanukovich; during the presidencies of P. Poroshenko and V. Zelenskiy, they were in opposition. Since 2014, when Russia occupied Crimea and created the “DNR/LNR”, these parties have either been very vague about the occupation, or openly called for the implementation of the Minsk Agreements political part as well as for active negotiations with the “DNR/LNR” and resumption of cooperation with Russia. Given the full-scale invasion of Russia, on March 20, 2022, the NSDC suspended the activities of parties with ties to the RF in Ukraine (*Zelenskiy: RNBO pryzupynyaye diyal'nist'...*, 2022), because the parties called for capitulation, undermined the image of the Armed Forces, and in some cities and towns their members began to collaborate with the invader. The removal of pro-Kremlin parties from Ukraine's information space cannot be seen as an attack on freedom of speech; on the contrary, it is consistent with Ukrainian law, the *Constitution of Ukraine* (Art. 34) (1996), the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* (Art. 10) (1950): restrictions or sanctions established by law and necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security and territorial integrity or public safety.

Every day on the news channel there are regular speeches of President V. Zelenskiy, morning and day reports of the adviser to the Minister of Internal Affairs V. Denysenko, regular appeals of the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada R. Stefanchuk, explanations of the Prime Minister D. Shmyhal, reports of the Chairman of the NSDC O. Danilov and informing about the progress of investigations from the Prosecutor General of Ukraine I. Venediktova, comments of the heads of the Regional Military Administrations (RMA), etc. On April 5, the President organized a long conference with journalists. Such a strong informational presence demonstrates to the citizens that the state leadership is aware of the events, is not detached from the people, controls the situation, protects the citizens and the state. As a result, it also contributes to the formation of a positive image of the authority.

The Ukrainians are in a situation of constant anxiety and uncertainty, so they are permanently looking for additional information. The official position of the authorities is supported and promoted by the Facebook pages of the Office of the President (V. Zelenskiy's video addresses), the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (live broadcasts, including the negotiation process), the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (daily operational information, successes of the Armed Forces and

territorial defense), State Emergency Service of Ukraine (operational information on the elimination of the consequences of a missile strike, demining, etc.), mayors, heads of RMA, etc.

Information and communication policy is not only about effective information on important events; it is also about information assistance to citizens in need. In March 2022, a team of volunteers created the *CoordiNation* platform to quickly and easily search for information in wartime Ukraine using reliable sources. In particular, one can learn how to help as a volunteer, how to join the information and cyber support of Ukraine, how to evacuate from the city and where to seek support abroad, where to find shelter, medicine, food and support for volunteers, how to act in dangerous situations during war, where to find free psychological aid, where to follow the news, how to check fakes and what are useful chatbots (Hlushchenko, 2022). The hotline of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Commissioner for Human Rights L. Denysova is open 24 hours a day. The Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories informs daily about the organization of humanitarian corridors for the delivery of humanitarian aid and the evacuation of residents of towns and villages from combat zones; Minister I. Vereshchuk reports daily on the successes and failures of rescue campaigns.

Russia is a very “skillful” manipulator, propagandist, creator of fakes with extensive experience of subversive activities borrowed from the “Empire of Evil”. And the study on media literacy of the Ukrainians, conducted by the research agency *Info Sapiens* in March 2021, shows that the problem of disinformation is relevant for 57% of the Ukrainian audience, while 28% consider it irrelevant and 6% have never heard about fake news. Another 9% found it hard to tell. 42% of Ukrainians never check information for its accuracy, whereas 31% search for additional and more detailed information rather than check it. Only a quarter of Ukrainians (24%) check media content (*Media Literacy Index of Ukrainians...*, 2021). In other words, Ukrainians are susceptible to fakes, which destructive effects have even more devastating consequences in wartime.

Given the potential strength of such influence, the “counteraction to fakes” area is implemented by the Center for Strategic Communications and Information Security at the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, the Center for Counteracting Disinformation, the Stratcom of the Armed Forces, the Information Troops of Ukraine, StratCom Ukraine, #*Yaknestatyovochem* [How Not to Become a Vegetable] group, news marathon, etc. It is important that Ukraine does not only fight against fakes, it prevents their spread: in advance of the enemy the above-mentioned structures inform Ukrainians about the fakes that Russia is preparing to launch; extensive media coverage of DeepFake technology and its possible use to discredit

the President (who allegedly had to announce a surrender) has been organized. The Center for Countering Disinformation at the NSDC of Ukraine recommends a new fact-check bot *Perevirka* [Verification] (*V Ukrayini zapustyly fakt chek-bot... , 2022*), which helps distinguish fake news in social media, in politics, to identify the Russian media fake news aimed at fighting Ukraine. To recognize fakes using a fact-check bot, one needs to send information for authentication. The link immediately goes to the team that can quickly check large amounts of information using artificial intelligence; the answer arrives in a few minutes. Admittedly, the international hacking group Anonymous also contributes to the fight against Russian fakes and to discredit Russia. In particular, Anonymous published a scan of the order of the RF Acting Minister of Defense D. Bulgakov on the preparation of fake videos in which the Ukrainian military allegedly torment “Russian prisoners of war”, which should show Ukraine’s violation of the Geneva Conventions (*Anonymous oprylyudnyly skan nakazu... , 2022*). Powerful and careful work has positive results: Ukrainians are gradually developing resilience to fakes.

However, perennial internal distrust in the authorities, multiplied by uncertainty and the need for even more information, urges Ukrainians more often (than, e.g., last year – the above-mentioned *Rating* survey) to turn to Telegram channels, which are generally perceived as insider information. The Armed Forces Stratcom, Information Troops, Center for Countering Disinformation, Media Detector, channels of V. Zelenskiy, D. Kuleba, P. Klimkin, P. Poroshenko, and other politicians provide news that, if not identical to official information, at least does not contradict it. However, there are many anonymous Telegram channels with a large audience that parasitize on the fears of Ukrainians and position themselves as an exclusive, close to the event, source. They are generally the largest disseminators of destructive information that provokes panic or depression. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine calls for checking information in official resources before reposting, as Russian invaders are suffering losses and trying to sow panic among Ukrainians. (It should be mentioned that the first 3–5 days some fakes were even in the United News Marathon as it was impossible to check the information because of fierce battles).

A unique project of Ukraine – the Public Organization Information Troops of Ukraine is created on the initiative of the Ministry of Digital Transformation. This is a community of active Ukrainians united to protect Ukraine from aggressive information propaganda by Russian special services; these are Internet users, bloggers, journalists, and volunteers. Information Troops have three fronts: Ukrainian, Russian, Western/Global (the last two are analyzed in the next section). On the Ukrainian front, their task is to disseminate important and truthful information; to help the government, the military and volunteers to work and coordinate; to raise

the fighting spirit and to quench the panic; or just to entertain (e.g., the story of a woman from Kiev who shot down a drone with a jar of tomatoes). In a situation of constant stress, danger, uncertainty, healthy communication is helpful and necessary for people; everyone in Ukraine has access to the truth, while Russians, both soldiers of the conquering army and civilians, are lost and mired in lies (Dovzhenko, 2022).

At the very beginning of the war, realizing that the Internet connection would be deteriorated due to hostilities and the occupier's intention to cut off the population from access to information, the Minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine M. Fedorov asked SpaceX Director General E. Musk to connect the country to satellite Internet. On March 2, 2022, the first Starlink satellite Internet stations arrived in Ukraine and now they operate in many cities/towns, including the destroyed ones. In addition, providers of fiber-optic infrastructure and digital services have launched a program to provide high-speed free internet in shelters and bomb proofs so that people can connect with the loved ones, get access to information, fight and educate in the information space.

Ukraine's counteraction: regional and global levels

Before speaking about the regional level, it should be emphasized that the author differentiates between the European and Russian sublevels; the specifics of information and communication activities vary significantly. The regional European sublevel provides for informing partners, intensifying their support; regional Russian is about the work with fakes, disinformation and the desire to make Russian society perceive reality objectively.

The media coverage (by both Ukrainian and foreign journalists) shapes the attitude of not only the population but also the foreign community to the state's foreign policy. The Adviser to the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine M. Podoliak has said that almost 2,000 foreign journalists cover the war with Russia in Ukraine (*Mayzhe 2000 inozemnykh zhurnalistiv...*, 2022). Being in the hottest spots of the war, they pass on objective information to the world, and this also serves as a means of "vaccinating" of foreign public against Kremlin disinformation and fakes.

In order to assist foreign colleagues to receive the most important information about the war in English, *I+I* media has created a special database, as there is a great demand for video and text materials, as well as operational information about the Russian war in Ukraine. The database is publicly available, and Ukrainian media outlets are asking everyone to share this information abroad for maximum publicity. The UNIAN news agency, which is part of the *I+I* media group and has the largest

operational photo news service in Ukraine, has opened its photo bank for all media, influencers and international agencies. Thus, anyone who wants to cover materials in the media can use all the photos related to Ukraine's resistance to Russian aggression for free. On February 26, the *I+I* media group initiated the shutdown of Russian news TV channels in the international market by sending an open letter to key television and regional providers. The first to respond were providers from Poland, Australia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Canada, and the Baltic countries, who, on February 26, 2022, began to turn off the RF propaganda channels in their network. Instead, the United News Marathon will be broadcast on their frequencies. *I+I* media has launched a digital flash mob designed to encourage social network users to abandon media content generated by the RF. People are encouraged to post on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, etc. with the hashtag *#TurnOffRussia* and tell about Russia's military aggression and the need for the world community to "turn off" Russian aggression to save Ukraine (*United Media...*, 2022).

As of March 28, 2022, thirty European countries have completely or partially shut down Russian propaganda channels. The European Platform of Regulatory Authorities has supported the Ukraine's National Council's call to combat Russian propaganda in Europe and has called on all European regulators to detect and stop Russian disinformation. At the same time, European regulators and the media continue to increase support to Ukraine in the information space. In particular, Ukraine has the opportunity to increase its accessibility in the information space of Romania (Romanian cable companies can broadcast two Ukrainian TV channels – Rada and Espresso – without requiring agreements from rights holders), Britain (Ukrainian broadcasters are invited to broadcast their programs on the British platforms (Sky, Virgin, Freesat and Freeview), Germany (RTL and ntv will soon launch a news program in Ukrainian), the Czech Republic (as part of the media group Media Bohemia, Radio Ukraine has started broadcasting; its content is aimed at supporting Ukrainian citizens who left their country fleeing Russian aggression), Poland (Polish regulator banned Russian channels, Ukrainian TV channels are broadcast instead; the largest Polish radio broadcaster RMF Group has created the Ukrainian-language radio *You Listen to RMF Ukraine!*) (*Dyvyys' ukrayins'ke!*..., 2022).

The war has changed President V. Zelenskiy: from an irresolute, even ridiculous head of state, he has rapidly evolved into a true leader of the nation who conducts powerful information activities at European and international levels. V. Zelenskiy's appeals to the Parliaments and the people of Poland, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, Israel, etc., are torn to quotations and they have become slogans of a new reality. This format of communication is successful because it results in the mobilization of the world community, political, economic, military

elites of states not only at the level of moral support; military and financial assistance, sanctions against Russia contribute to Ukraine's struggle in the war. It should be mentioned that the heads of ministries and departments also regularly address the heads of relevant European and international structures to convey the truth about the state and threats posed by Russian aggression not only for Ukraine but also for other countries (e.g., the appeal of the Ministry of Energy of Ukraine to the IAEA with proposals on safety at nuclear power plants in the conditions of Russian aggression; the appeal of the Minister for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories to the International Committee of the Red Cross to intensify its activities in Ukraine; the appeal of the Prime Minister of Ukraine to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to exclude the Russian Federation from the CE, etc.).

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine D. Kuleba is actively communicating internationally, he calls for tougher sanctions against Russia, gathering evidence for the Hague Tribunal on Putin's decision and the atrocities of the Russian army, promoting Ukraine's EU integration, providing military assistance to the state, Ukraine's accession to NATO, etc. The results are impressive: the EU institutions support the idea of granting Ukraine candidate status, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court has launched an investigation into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Ukraine; as of April 4, 2022, the EU is preparing a fifth package of sanctions against Russia; the USA, Japan, the United Kingdom, Canada and others have imposed sanctions on the RF and individuals; the head of the British government promised to "starve Putin's war machine" (reaction to the Bucha massacre) and claimed that London authorized additional financial support for the investigation of Russian crimes in Ukraine and sent investigators, etc.

Regarding the fight against fakes at the global/regional (European) level, the Information Troops of Ukraine bring news to the world about Russia's attack on Ukraine, voice Ukraine's needs and requests for help, call for tougher sanctions and international isolation of the aggressor. In the first weeks of the war, Ukraine was already on the front pages of all publications and in the first stories of all news releases, but over time, such attention of the world may weaken. Letters, messages and signatures on petitions are then needed to hold this attention. In addition, the true version of events has to contend with Russian propaganda, and Ukraine does not yet have a strong foreign language broadcasting capable of spreading Ukraine's position around the world. That is why ordinary Ukrainians have to be "foreign broadcasters". New resources have already been created, e.g., *We Are Ukraine* and the multilingual *Post to Stop War in Ukraine* (Dovzhenko, 2022).

As to the regional (Russian) level, the task of the Information Troops is to break the plan of the Russian authority, according to which the entire local society should

exist in a fictional reality created by Kremlin propaganda, and to believe in Putin's delusion. This front brings a lot of disappointment to Ukrainians, because Russians are often hopeless. However, the importance of the Russian direction is evidenced by the panicked haste with which the Russian authority kills the remnants of freedom of speech and cuts off its citizens' access to any resources where they can see destroyed Ukrainian cities (instead of "surgically affected military targets"), brave Ukrainian army and people (instead of "Nazis on Banderamobiles"), as well as scrap, blood and entrails of the Russian army.

Thanks to projects like *War: Stories from Ukraine* or the podcast *UA: The Day We Survived*, the world cannot only learn the facts and see pictures of the war in which Ukraine is defending its freedom from Russian invasion, but also understands and feels the Ukrainians. The reaction of foreigners is important because it creates a feeling that Ukrainians are not alone and it gives strength to hold on to victory. Owing to such activities, Russian state's lies and propaganda are now being cleared from the information space throughout the civilized world, and Ukrainian voices are heard and listened to.

Since the beginning of the war, all Ukrainians have joined the information and psychological warfare against Russia (in particular, the IT Army of Ukraine, UA Student Union), namely: they organized DDoS attacks on Russia's infrastructure facilities, they were successful the first 3–5 days, then the Russians strengthened protection and Ukrainian professionals joined more strongly); they worked with reviews on Google Maps, spreading the truth about the war in Russian cities (great influence or change of consciousness did not happen, because such information strongly contradicted Russian propaganda, and therefore it only irritated the Russians; but in wartime it is also a positive result of influencing the enemy); when the Russians began blocking such instruments, the Ukrainians "switched" to Russian social networks and started a "guerrilla war" there in groups in order to create doubts and intimidate the consequences of sanctions. So far, the attitude of the Russian population to the war has not changed, but at least some fear about their financial well-being is being formed.

Conclusions

Information and communication policy, which is focused on ensuring effective communication with citizens at the levels of "the authority – domestic public", "the authority – foreign public", "citizens – citizens of other countries", acquires its specificity in wartime due to aggressive environment. The author understands

“information and communication policy in wartime” as the management of information flows by the initiator of influence (President, government and non-governmental organizations, civil society, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, etc.) in order to transmit objective, verified information to domestic and foreign public, to prevent and counteract the destructive information influences of the enemy, to form trust and public support for the political leadership of the state and the Armed Forces, to unify the whole Ukrainian society for the common struggle for victory. Thus, Ukraine’s information and communication policy develops in two directions: 1) informing the domestic and foreign public about the course of events and decisions of the President and relevant public authorities, providing citizens of Ukraine with access to information important to them in wartime; 2) counteracting and combating fakes spread by the RF in Ukraine and the world, in particular in Europe. The tools include the media, social networks, messengers, specially created communication bodies and structures of the state level, and public organizations.

The author believes that the internal vector has positive results: due to the powerful information activities and communications of the President and the political and economic elite, respective state and non-state structures, the panic is reduced; the Ukrainians are mobilized for struggle; they have access to necessary information (problems appear in the temporarily occupied towns/villages); awareness and criticism of fakes are increased. The external “Western” level also has achievements: Ukraine has received international moral, financial and military support; due to a unique project of *United Media* news, not only Ukrainians but the world receives the maximum possible (in wartime) objective information; sanctions against Russia are imposed. However, the work in the RF information space is problematic because it is exposed to fierce opposition by the objects of RF propaganda, i.e., ordinary Russians.

The war lasts, the enemy increases its information influence in the occupied territories and on the international community; new challenges emerge every day requiring new countermeasures. Thus, the information and communication policy of Ukraine in wartime will continue to develop new forms and methods of implementation, and thus new practices will be further studied. The issue of openness of Ukraine’s information space after the war also remains relevant. Today, the information space is more or less tightly controlled by the authorities, so what will be the information policy of the ruling elite in the future – that is a topic for further research as well.

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