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DIGITAL DIPLOMACY IN UKRAINE

Introduction. It is hard to imagine the life of a modern person without the Internet and social networks. Today, they are extremely important informational resources and instruments of influence. This is the reason why in the 21st century a digital element has appeared in public diplomacy of many countries. Electronic diplomacy is a young phenomenon in international relations that arose in the United States, and got there its theoretical and practical design. The phenomenon does not have a common name and definition, but in the international arena it is more often than not called "digital diplomacy".

Review of recent publications. Given the urgency and demand for the implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the field of diplomatic relations, the scientific community quite actively explores the issue of e-diplomacy. Among the contemporary scholars in Ukraine the issues of digital diplomacy have been considered by J. Turchin, N. Grushchinsky, D. Gaidai, B. Gumenyuk, L. Litra, Y. Kononenko, Y. Falk, O. Sahaidak. Also, in the post-soviet space Russian scholars, namely E. Pantelev, L. Permyakov, N. Tsvetkov, E. Zinoviev, and others tried to elucidate the subject of e-diplomacy. Mostly, researchers have been developing the concepts and definitions of diplomacy, which uses ICT, in particular the Internet, as one of the working tools. Among foreign researchers F. Hanson, G. Gerbner, J. Grunig, L. Pai have been actively engaged in digital diplomacy issues.

Objective of the paper is to explore such element of Ukraine's foreign policy activities as digital diplomacy considering the process of its formation and the current state of this phenomenon.

Today Ukraine successfully implements the digital component in the vector of public diplomacy. Public authorities do not only have official websites, but also accounts in social networks, the latter also used by high-level officials, such as the president, ministers, deputies, diplomats and others.

Results of the research. The phenomenon of web-diplomacy in Ukraine has 2 stages of its development. The first one covers the period from 2010 to 2013, when electronic diplomacy appeared among the tools of Ukrainian politicians. The first official pages of government departments, such as the Presidential Administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Parliament, on *Facebook* [1], *Twitter* [2], *YouTube* [3] began to emerge. By 2013 social networking pages were used only as a space for duplication of news posted on official websites of authorities. Most of the publications were related to the participation of officials in certain events or other similar news. The audience was small or almost absent, most of the readers were Ukrainians.

The next period started in 2014. The presence in the online community has become more extensive, and *Google+* and *VKontakte* have been added to the list (the activity of agencies in the last network has been suspended since 2017, due to the introduction of appropriate sanctions against the Russian Federation), as well as other online platforms, blogs and networks. Due to Russia's aggression in the Donbas region, the annexation of Crimea and internal disturbances, the Ukrainian government felt the urgent need for additional means of defending national interests, supporting the image and achieving goals in the foreign policy arena. Therefore, the use of social networks and the Internet in the context of diplomatic activity has been revised.

Posts in social networks began to appear with more regularity, their content became more informative. From the regime of one-way broadcasting of information, state institutions are trying to enter the dialogue, responding to the readers' inquiries, establishing contact with the audience and taking into account its reaction to certain news. Today Ukraine is present at several Top-50s on the *Twiplomacy* website. It is represented by the accounts of Petro Poroshenko, Volodymyr Groisman and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Petro Poroshenko and Volodymyr Groisman have been mentioned in Twitter and Instagram in terms of activity ratings, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – in the rating of activities in microblogging [4].

One of the crucial problems that still remains unresolved is language. Most of the sites and profiles in social networks are in Ukrainian, which means that the majority of their views, subscribers and readers are both Ukrainians in Ukraine and those living in other countries. If the pages have in-language counterparts, usually with English, then the information there is not complete and regular. This tendency, for instance, is clearly traced when comparing Ukrainian and English news feeds on the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine [5].

Conclusion. As a result, in the last 5 years digital diplomacy has become increasingly important in Ukraine's foreign policy. More often it is aimed at three main goals: counteracting Russian aggression, creating a positive image of Ukraine in the minds of foreigners, as well as familiarizing their own citizens with European values.

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