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DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE CIVIL SERVICE SPHERE

Abstract. The article examines the digitalization of the civil service as one of the priority areas of its reform in Ukraine in the context of the transformation of the public administration system. The main attention is focused on revealing the content and significance of the digital transformation of the civil service, as well as on the analysis of the institutional, organizational and legal foundations of its provision. The evolution of approaches to the digitalization of the civil service is considered. It is found that it opens up new opportunities for increasing the efficiency, transparency and accessibility of public services, which allow for a more prompt response to the needs of citizens. The functional capabilities of key information and communication technologies introduced into the civil service system, which are used in the processes of personnel management, organization of entry into the civil service, evaluation of performance and professional development of civil servants are characterized. The main areas of digitalization are analyzed, in particular, the provision of electronic administrative services, the development of e-government, the use of state registers and the implementation of the concept of «state as a platform». It is proven that successful digitalization of the civil service is an important factor in increasing the efficiency of public administration, transparency of the activities of state authorities, quality and accessibility of public services, as well as strengthening citizens' trust in public institutions. The article focuses on the key challenges and risks of the digital transformation of the civil service, in particular in the field of personal data protection, information security, overcoming digital inequality and forming an appropriate level of digital competencies of civil servants. The conclusion is made about the feasibility of further improving the regulatory framework, institutional support and strategic planning of the digital transformation of the civil service, taking into account the conditions of martial law and the tasks of post-war reconstruction of Ukraine.

Key words: *digital transformation, civil service, electronic government, state as a platform, digital competencies, digitalization, personnel management.*

Шевченко Л. В., Цифрова трансформація у сфері державної служби

Анотація. У статті досліджується цифровізація державної служби як один із пріоритетних напрямів її реформування в Україні в умовах трансформації системи публічного управління. Основна увага зосереджується на розкритті змісту та значення цифрової трансформації державної служби, а також на аналізі інституційних, організаційних і правових засад її забезпечення. Розглянуто еволюцію підходів до цифровізації державної служби. З'ясовано, що вона відкриває нові можливості для підвищення ефективності, прозорості та доступності державних послуг, які дозволяють більш оперативно реагувати на потреби громадян. Охарактеризовано функціональні можливості ключових інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій, запроваджених у систему державної служби, що застосовуються у процесах управління персоналом, організації вступу на державну службу, оцінювання результатів службової діяльності та професійного розвитку державних службовців. Проаналізовано основні напрями цифровізації, зокрема надання електронних адміністративних послуг, розвиток електронного урядування, використання державних реєстрів і впровадження концепції «держава як платформа». Доведено, що успішна цифровізація державної служби є важливим чинником підвищення ефективності публічного управління, прозорості діяльності органів державної влади, якості та доступності публічних послуг, а також зміцнення довіри громадян до інститутів публічної влади. У статті акцентується увага на ключових викликах і ризиках цифрової трансформації державної служби, зокрема у сфері захисту персональних даних, інформаційної безпеки, подолання цифрової нерівності та формування належного рівня цифрових компетентностей державних службовців. Зроблено висновок про доцільність



подальшого вдосконалення нормативно-правової бази, інституційного забезпечення та стратегічного планування цифрової трансформації державної служби з урахуванням умов воєнного стану та завдань післявоєнного відновлення України.

Ключові слова: цифрова трансформація, державна служба, електронний уряд, держава як платформа, цифрові компетенції, цифровізація, управління персоналом.

Relevance of the research topic. Digital transformation in the civil service is one of the key factors in the modernization of public administration and increasing the efficiency of the functioning of state institutions in modern conditions. Digital transformation is particularly relevant in the context of reforming the public administration system in Ukraine, implementing the state's European integration goals, as well as ensuring the effective work of public authorities in the context of martial law and post-war reconstruction.

At the same time, the digitalization of the civil service gives rise to a number of problems related to the protection of personal data, information security, digital inequality, as well as the need to form new professional competencies of civil servants, which necessitates the need for a comprehensive scientific study of digital transformation as a systemic process that covers the legal, organizational, technological and personnel aspects of the functioning of the civil service.

The purpose of this article is to systematically analyze the process of digital transformation of the civil service and identify its key areas.

Presentation of the main material. Digital transformation in the civil service is one of the key areas of modernization of public administration in the context of the formation of a digital society. It is due to global processes of digitalization, the development of information and communication technologies, as well as the need to increase the efficiency, openness and accountability of public authorities.

In modern conditions, the digital transformation of the civil service is considered not only as a technical update of management processes, but as a complex institutional change that affects the organization of the public service, the status of civil servants and the mechanisms for implementing public functions. In a theoretical dimension, the digital transformation of the civil service encompasses the transition from traditional bureaucratic management models to

flexible and customer-oriented forms of public administration.

It should be noted that in the early stages, the digitalization of the civil service focused mainly on the implementation of electronic document management and the provision of administrative services in an online format. However, today, digital transformation involves a comprehensive rethinking of the role of the civil service, its functional tasks and methods of managerial influence.

It is not only about using digital technologies as a tool to increase efficiency, but also about forming a new logic of public administration functioning, focused on the needs of citizens, openness and transparency. In particular, digital transformation encompasses the integration of digital technologies into all levels of public administration, the use of data analytics, automated systems, as well as the development of digital participation of citizens in the processes of making managerial decisions. It involves changing approaches to the formation and implementation of public policy, improving mechanisms for interagency interaction and improving the quality of managerial decisions. Thus, the key paradigm is the concept of «government as a platform» (GaP), which involves the creation of common digital blocks (APIs, registries, identification systems) that can be used by different departments for the rapid development of services, as well as by the private sector to create value-added applications, transforming the state from a monolithic service provider into an ecosystem that promotes innovation.

Within the framework of the digital transformation of public authorities in Ukraine, the digitalization of the civil service is implemented in accordance with the requirements of current legislation and taking into account international obligations in the context of European integration. Thus, the legal basis for the functioning of the civil service in Ukraine is determined by the Law of Ukraine «On Civil Service»,^[1] which defines the general principles of the civil service, includ-

ing the principle of professionalism, openness and transparency (Article 4) and the principle of increasing the level of professional competence (Article 8). The introduction of electronic systems for personnel selection and assessment, digital personal files, automated procedures for assessing the competence of civil servants contributes to the implementation of these principles in practice. In particular, automated assessment of competences contributes to impartial selection (Articles 14–17 of the Law); electronic services for improving professional skills provide access to educational materials and online testing (Article 22) [1]. The Law also regulates the status, rights and obligations of civil servants, mechanisms for ensuring the effectiveness of public administration. In addition, the law establishes the legal basis for the introduction of digital technologies into the activities of state institutions, regulates the issues of professional development of employees, their accountability and responsibility, ensuring the integrity and stability of the civil service system.

The legal status of electronic document management and electronic management decisions is enshrined in the Law of Ukraine «On Electronic Documents and Electronic Document Management» [2], which defines the concept of an electronic document, establishes requirements for its creation, circulation, storage and use, and also enshrines the principle of legal equality of an electronic document and a document on paper. Also of importance in this context is the Law of Ukraine «On Electronic Identification and Electronic Trust Services», which regulates the use of electronic signatures and other means of electronic identification, ensuring the legitimacy and security of electronic management decision-making in the activities of public authorities [3]. The Law of Ukraine «On Administrative Procedure» (Article 3) [4] provides for the possibility of carrying out administrative actions in electronic form, which creates a legal basis for digital procedures in the activities of civil servants. Ensuring the openness of the activities of state bodies is related to the Law of Ukraine «On Access to Public Information» [5]. At the same time, the implementation of electronic petitions and digital public consultations can be based on the provisions of laws on citizen participation in

public policy, in particular, taking into account the Law of Ukraine «On Public Associations» [6].

The Law of Ukraine «On Personal Data Protection»[7] is important, which defines: basic requirements for the collection, processing and storage of personal data; rights of data subjects (Articles 8–11); obligations of data controllers and operators. These norms are central to ensuring security when using digital technologies in the civil service. The issue of information security is additionally regulated by special acts of the Cabinet of Ministers and standards that implement best international practices in the protection of information systems.

The digitalization of the public service in Ukraine is also closely linked to the implementation of European integration obligations in the field of digital transformation and public administration, in particular, the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement [8] contains a chapter on administrative cooperation and reforms, in which Ukraine undertakes to harmonize national legislation with European standards of administrative law, public administration and e-government. Ukraine is also implementing EU norms on digital services and electronic identification, which directly affects the legal regulation of digital interaction with citizens, which concerns, in particular, the standards established by the eIDAS regulation – the EU norm on electronic identification and trust services, which form the single digital market. In the Strategy for the Digital Transformation of Public Administration (as part of national strategic documents), Ukraine is focused on the principles of open government, transparency, accessibility of electronic services and citizen participation, which are characteristic of the EU Digital Single Market and the European Standard for the Assessment of the Quality of e-Administrative Services. Thus, the legislation of Ukraine is being formed taking into account the principles of the GDPR regarding the rights of data subjects, minimization of processing, purpose limitation and transparency, which is in line with European integration obligations on the protection of personal data. It is important to note that in modern conditions, digital transformation in the civil service has become systemic both in intra-organizational civil service relations and in external legal relations within which civil

servants interact with citizens and legal entities. Digital tools are actively used in the field of personnel management in the civil service, during the organization of competitions for positions, professional training and career development, as well as in the process of providing administrative services and considering citizens' appeals. In particular, an important role in the digitalization of personnel processes in the civil service is played by the Unified Civil Service Vacancy Portal (career.gov.ua), which provides publication of information about vacancies, submission of documents for participation in competitions, remote testing, publication of results and electronic communication with candidates. It is worth noting that in the period from the introduction of the Unified Civil Service Vacancy Portal to the beginning of full-scale armed aggression against Ukraine, systematic work was carried out to improve its functioning and expand its instrumental potential. It is important that in 2021 the portal's functionality was significantly expanded. Among the key innovations, it is worth highlighting the introduction of remote testing for knowledge of general legislation for candidates for civil service positions of categories «B» and «C» that do not belong to the positions of reform specialists. In addition, a mechanism for certifying the results of remote testing was introduced by imposing a qualified electronic signature by the candidate, which ensured the legal significance of such results. An important element of the digitalization of competitive procedures was also the conduct of interviews for civil service positions of categories «A», «B» and «C» using technical means in the videoconference mode [9].

At the same time, due to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the functioning of the Unified Civil Service Vacancy Portal was suspended from February 25, 2022. Subsequently, in order to ensure the continuity of the activities of public authorities under martial law, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine introduced a mechanism for non-competitive appointments to civil service positions for the period of martial law in accordance with the Law of Ukraine «On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on the Functioning of the Civil Service and Local Self-Government during the Period of Martial Law» of May 12, 2022 [10].

In the context of the digital transformation of the civil service, the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS), which is a comprehensive automated information system designed to collect, process, store and protect data on employees of public authorities, is a key element in the formation of a digital personnel infrastructure. The system is created and operates within the limits and procedure determined by the legislation of Ukraine, in order to form and ensure the operation of a centralized database of civil servants and employees of state bodies. HRMIS is aimed at meeting the needs of automation and digitalization of key personnel and financial processes in the civil service, in particular, personnel management processes, accounting of personnel decisions, human resources planning, as well as accrual and payment of wages. The implementation of the specified system contributes to increasing the efficiency of the activities of personnel departments, unifying management procedures and ensuring transparency of personnel policy in state bodies. The implementation of HRMIS is carried out in accordance with strategic decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, in particular on the basis of the order «On approval of the Concept of implementation of the human resources management information system in state bodies and approval of the action plan for its implementation» dated December 1, 2017 [11], as well as the order «Some issues of reforming the public administration of Ukraine» dated July 21, 2021 [12]. The specified regulatory legal acts determine the phased implementation of the system, the range of subjects of its use and the main directions of integration of HRMIS with other state information resources. It is worth noting that some researchers consider HRMIS as a kind of analogue of the ProZorro system, however, in the field of human resources management in the civil service [13, p. 204]. Among the key advantages of HRMIS, scientists highlight the possibility of simultaneously achieving informational, organizational, methodological and managerial goals. In particular, the system provides the formation of a single integrated database of civil servants and employees of state bodies, digitalization and optimization of internal personnel procedures, support for making

managerial decisions, electronic interaction of state information resources, as well as access of employees to information about their service through the electronic HRMIS user account [11, p. 545–546]. At the same time, HRMIS is reasonably considered as an important prerequisite for the transformation of the public service of Ukraine into a digital format and as a basic element of a comprehensive IT project to create a digital civil service [14]. It is also indicative that the further development and implementation of HRMIS is provided for by the draft Recovery Plan of Ukraine, prepared by the working group on public administration reform [15].

The information and communication system «Reserve of employees of state bodies for work in the deoccupied territories of Ukraine» (reserve.nads.gov.ua) was created to implement the government pilot project to create the so-called «Recovery Reserve» [16]. The formation of the reserve takes place in electronic format. The system provides automation and digitalization of the process: it allows submitting questionnaires in electronic form, collects and stores information about persons included in the reserve, and also provides the opportunity to search and form lists of candidates according to certain criteria for appointment to positions in state bodies in the deoccupied territories.

The Knowledge Management Web Portal in the Field of Vocational Training «Knowledge Management Portal» (pdp.nacs.gov.ua) [17] is a state specialized information and communication system that provides free access to information services in the field of vocational training for civil servants, heads of local state administrations and their deputies, local government

officials and deputies of local councils via the Internet. The portal performs the following main functions: increases the professional competence of civil servants and local government officials through systematic training; promotes the development of the educational services market; informs about existing educational programs and advanced training programs; provides electronic interaction and exchange of experience; monitors the quality of training through user surveys. Currently, more than 127 thousands of users. These are both civil servants and local government officials. These are 132 educational institutions, as well as 24 projects/programs of international technical assistance and other non-governmental organizations. The Portal hosts more than 1,700 advanced training programs, including 68 master's degree programs. In conclusion, it should be noted that digitalization is a key direction in the reform of the civil service in Ukraine. The use of information and communication technologies not only increases the efficiency of state bodies, but also ensures their functioning and development under martial law. And, although a significant amount of work has already been done on innovative technologies that have been introduced into the civil service system, there are still a number of challenges related to the full integration of digital solutions into all subsystems of the civil service, increasing the digital competence of personnel and ensuring the security of information flows. Further development and improvement of digital technologies in the field of civil service is a necessary condition for increasing the transparency, efficiency, and adaptability of government bodies to modern requirements.

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