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EU EXPERIENCE IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES³

The European Union has considerable experience in the digital transformation of administrative services. This process aims to improve the accessibility, efficiency and convenience of public services for citizens and businesses. The main aspects of the digital transformation of administrative services in the EU include such aspects as: electronic identifiers and electronic signatures; electronic public service platforms; electronic submission of documents; digital process automation; data protection and cybersecurity; increased accessibility; international cooperation.

Although the digitization of administrative services in all European countries is comprehensive, each sector has its own peculiarities and speed of digitalization. One of the areas of digital transformation in Europe is the introduction of e-government. The European Commission has already made significant steps towards e-government at the

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national and European levels. However, not all EU member states have the same level of digitalization strategies proposed by the European Commission for their governments. According to the eGovernment Benchmark 2020, the Greek government is lagging behind in achieving specific digital transformation goals such as transparency, cross-border mobility, key enablers, and therefore digitalization and penetration rates are significantly lower than the EU average [3].

The issue of e-government implementation as a means of government digital transformation is widely analyzed in different EU member states. In particular, the researchers conducted a detailed analysis of the application of the e-New Public Management concept and assessed the benefits of its implementation for society and business in Poland. Implementing the principles adopted in the European Union, Poland has created an organizational framework, including legal norms on informatization, for the implementation of digitalization in public administration. The next step for the development of digitalisation of administrative service delivery in Poland will be the creation of the Electronic Public Administration Communication System (Electronic communication system of public administration – SEKAP) and the Polish electronic platform for public administration services (a Polish approach to building a platform – ePUAP), improvement of interoperability, integration of SEKAP and ePUAP, and implementation of an e-learning platform [4].

The impetus for the information and communication technologies in the provision of administrative services was the transformation of cities into "smart cities". Smart cities use information and communication technologies to connect urban activities that have not been connected until now. The functional concept of using information and communication technologies makes it possible to achieve many goals and objectives of developing communication with citizens, in particular, the provision of knowledge-based services using the collection of "big data". [2].

Today, virtual communities (VCs) can help improve the accessibility and quality of administrative services by facilitating interaction between citizens, authorities and other stakeholders via the Internet. VCs play an important role in the provision of administrative

services, especially in the context of modern technology and digitalization. Among the ways in which they can be used are: forums and social networks; virtual advice centers; electronic public consultations; joint projects and innovations; training and information education; electronic petitions and appeals.

In particular, researchers are studying the impact of a community of virtual users on the development of a new multimedia service as part of an EU-funded innovation project. The virtual communities considered in this context are researchers and associated administrative staff working on collaborative projects or shared tasks in or managing remote laboratories around the world [1]

The European Union is an active partner of Ukraine in the implementation of decentralization. The EU has provided financial and technical support, advised the Ukrainian government on local government reform and provided expert assistance in this process. The European Union also helped to create the necessary conditions for local business development and supported the implementation of community development projects.

Some of the key aspects of EU support for decentralization in Ukraine include:

1. Financial support: The EU has provided financial assistance for the implementation of projects to develop local communities and improve infrastructure at the local level.

2. Technical support: The EU provided technical assistance to improve the administrative and management capacity of local authorities.

3. Support for legal and institutional reforms: The EU has helped to improve legislation and procedures related to decentralization.

4. Development of civil society: The EU supported the development of civil society organizations and other forms of civic participation at the local level.

5. Monitoring and evaluation of results: The EU used monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress of the reform and its impact on citizens' lives.

One of the programs supporting the decentralization reform in Ukraine is the U-LEAD (Ukraine - Local Empowerment, Accountability and Development) program, or

U-LEAD with Europe, which is a program of cooperation between the Ukrainian government, the European Union and its member states Germany, Sweden, Poland, Denmark, Estonia and Slovenia in creating a multi-level governance system that is transparent, accountable and responsive to the needs of Ukrainian citizens.

In Ukraine, the opening of Administrative Service Centers (ASCs) was part of the decentralization reform and aimed at improving the quality of administrative services and providing more convenient access to them for citizens.

An important segment of administrative service delivery in ASCs is the establishment of communication with citizens; as such communication is an important component of the effective functioning of such centers and meeting the needs of citizens in the provision of administrative services. Key aspects of communication in ASCs:

- Contact center: creating a contact center or telephone hotline for citizens to receive information and advice on the services provided by the ASC;
- website and online portals: development and maintenance of a website or online portal for the ASC, where citizens can find information on available services, opening hours and other useful information;
- social media: use of social media to communicate with citizens and provide them with up-to-date information about ASC's work, new services and changes in service delivery procedures;
- queuing and recording system: introduction of an electronic queuing and recording system to avoid long queues and improve service delivery;
- reports and feedback: collecting and analyzing feedback from citizens on the work of the ASC, as well as providing regular reports on the work of the center and responding to citizens' requests;
- public events and consultations: organizing public events, open discussions and consultations with citizens to discuss issues related to the work of the ASC and the quality of service provision;
- staff training: Training of ASC staff to interact with citizens, answer questions and solve problems;

Effective communication between the authorities and citizens is an important element of a democratic society. The EU countries have already managed to establish effective mechanisms of interaction, ensuring open exchange of information and consideration of public opinion. Ukraine, in particular, can improve its practices, taking into account the European experience, to create a transparent and accessible communication environment that will help increase trust between the authorities and citizens.

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