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Social communication in crisis situations: The case of Ukrainian media, 2022-2025

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Abstract. The aim of this study was to assess communication mechanisms within the media space during the full-scale Russian aggression (2022-2025). A comprehensive methodology was applied, combining institutional and narrative analysis as well as a detailed case-study approach, focusing on the materials of leading media outlets, state institutions and fact-checking organisations alongside the examination of regulatory documents. The principal finding of the study was the identification of a dialectical tension between high social resilience and decreasing democratic accountability within crisis communication practices. The research demonstrated that Ukrainian media provide rapid information updates and strengthen social cohesion through a patriotic framing and convergent journalism (the speed of Telegram and X combined with verification). The study also revealed internal pressure on independent journalism through SLAPP lawsuits and self-censorship, which undermines its watchdog function. A significant information gap was identified: despite the achievements of the Centre for Countering disinformation and the Centre for strategic communications at the macro-level (international narratives), their effectiveness at the domestic micro-level remains limited due to low adaptability to “meso-news spaces”. The study further substantiated the role of methodological hybridisation in fact-checking practices. The findings indicated that overcoming this paradox requires a transition from a centralised to a network-based communication model and the elimination of technological divides and democratic deficits. The practical significance of the study lies in the fact that its results may be used by stakeholders to strengthen Ukraine’s informational and democratic resilience under wartime conditions

Keywords: social resilience; disinformation; meso-news space; fact-checking; convergent journalism; fake

Introduction

The relevance of the study is conditioned by the radical transformation of the Ukrainian media landscape following the full-scale war. Under these circumstances, the media have become a central element of the system

of national resilience and information security. The wartime environment, marked by constant threats, shelling and social tension, has foregrounded the need for an in-depth understanding of the mechanisms that shape a

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unified national narrative, enable effective counteraction to disinformation and sustain trust in official sources.

Social communication in crises has evolved alongside the rise of social media (for example X), which foster rapid interactions, allowing organisations and individuals to share updates, counter disinformation and engage with the public. This transformation has led to the development of models such as Social-Mediated Crisis Communication (SMCC), which emphasises the interaction between organisations and the public during crises. This position was highlighted in the study by D. Pramata (2025), where the author stressed the role of influencers on social networks and the SMCC model in managing information dissemination during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic (coronavirus disease 2019). The findings of N. Abd Elfattah (2024) showed that social media function as an essential tool in crisis communication, enabling both formal and informal actors to disseminate information, shape public perceptions and counter misinformation. Their effectiveness was demonstrated during emergencies, including COVID-19, where they contributed to increased public engagement and improved response strategies. A similar view was expressed in the research of N. Zammar (2021), which underlined the importance of social media in crisis communication, particularly the strategy of Dairy Khoury aimed at effective message dissemination and countering rumour-mongering. According to the study, this strategy helps to protect organisational reputation when traditional communication methods prove insufficient.

The role of social communication in crises, especially amid an ongoing conflict such as in Ukraine, is central to shaping public perception, mobilising resources and sustaining social cohesion. The Ukrainian media landscape has not only adapted to wartime conditions, highlighting the importance of communication strategies that resonate with society, but has also become a subject of academic attention. According to O. Snytko (2023), effective crisis communication in wartime Ukraine requires concise and balanced messages that combine factual and emotional components, using suggestive language to support strategic narratives and maintain public morale, including through coordinated media efforts and public addresses. Ukrainian media operate with a strong focus on social responsibility during wartime, prioritising ethical adaptation, audience expectations, and technological strategies throughout 2022-2025 while addressing disinformation and preserving editorial independence amid national security and economic resilience challenges. The results of the study by M. Harmel & O. Buchynska (2025) indicated that the full-scale war has altered the operational structure of Ukrainian media organisations, creating challenges for maintaining standards of democratic journalism while incorporating national security imperatives. The authors argue that wartime realities have led to the emergence of "war media ethics" as a distinct professional paradigm balancing informational

transparency and security considerations. According to O. Marukhovska-Kartunova *et al.* (2023), the effectiveness of social communication under Russian aggression is crucial, as it aims to build and verify the informational foundation, foster mobilisation and uphold public support. Thus, social media address challenges such as disinformation, censorship and psychological threats to journalists. The findings of O. Buchynska (2025) reveal the communicative practices of Ukrainian civil society during the war, concentrating on coordination of volunteer efforts and international advocacy, demonstrating how communication adapted to crisis through innovative digital tools and emotional engagement to mobilise support. The researcher identified four key areas of modern Ukrainian public relations (based on cases such as United24, Army of Drones and #standwithukraine): governmental communication (centralisation, enhanced trust), military communication (strategic messaging, personnel branding), corporate communication (social responsibility, national identity) and civil society communication (volunteer coordination, international advocacy). The study by P. Burdiak (2023) demonstrated that Meta platforms (Facebook, Instagram) apply content moderation restrictions affecting Ukrainian media, journalists, bloggers, activists and ordinary users documenting Russian aggression. To address ongoing moderation issues, platforms must increase transparency of standards and community rules, cease blocking satirical content and update policies according to the geopolitical realities of international armed conflicts. The findings of M. Prokop (2023) demonstrate that in crisis conditions communication is facilitated both internationally and domestically, ensuring multiple forms of assistance and support to victims of war. In addition, social networks (such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram and X) are used by the Ukrainian government for official announcements of major military developments and for disseminating information worldwide concerning the consequences of Russian aggression.

The literature review identified a research gap in the absence of an analysis of the evolution and interaction of all key types of social communication actors (governmental, military, corporate, civil society) over an extended period (2022-2025), considering the synergetic effect of their influence on the development of a unified national narrative, counteraction to disinformation and national resilience during an existential crisis. Therefore, the aim of this research was to examine effective models for developing a unified national narrative through the media under wartime conditions. The objective involved the following tasks: to analyse the transformation of governmental and military communication strategies (including the use of social media platforms) in Ukraine throughout 2022-2025 and their impact on trust in official sources; to identify major challenges and practical mechanisms for countering external and internal disinformation and manipulation within the Ukrainian media

space, considering interactions between communication actors; to develop systematic recommendations for state institutions aimed at improving the effectiveness of crisis communication.

Materials and Methods

The empirical research was based on the analysis of the transformation and effectiveness of social communication in the Ukrainian media landscape under full-scale war conditions (2022–2025). The selection of materials was guided by the necessity of a comprehensive and representative analysis of crisis communication, covering multiple functions: state response (Centre for strategic communications (n.d.) and Centre for countering disinformation (n.d.)), independent and public journalism (“Suspilne Media”, n.d.; “Ukrainska Pravda”, n.d.) and systems countering disinformation (StopFake, n.d.; Reuters Fact Check, n.d.). The materials were selected according to criteria of strategic relevance (formation of national and international narratives), demonstration of key communication models (Telegram speed, watchdog function, dual-channel strategies) and documentation of internal challenges (SLAPP lawsuits – Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation), enabling the study of the crisis communication paradox: success in external unity amid declining internal democratic robustness.

Institutional analysis was applied to assess the role and effectiveness of key media and governance actors, in particular to identify internal pressures on independent journalism – Directive (EU) 2024/1069 of the European Parliament and of the Council (2024) and Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council 2010/13/EU (2010). Using this method, legal frameworks for media operations under martial law were examined: Order of the Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine No. 73 (2022), the Law of Ukraine No. 2849-IX (2022), the Law of Ukraine No. 540/97-VR (1997). This method also guided the analysis of state institution cases (Centre for countering disinformation, n.d.; Centre for strategic communications, n.d.) to determine their mission and achievements.

Narrative analysis was used to deconstruct both pro-Ukrainian and Russian propaganda narratives in fact-checking materials, including Reuters Fact Check “Fact Check: 2024 video of strikes on Kyiv falsely described as Russia retaliation to 2025 drone attack” (Reuters, 2025) and “Fake: Ukrainian TV channel ‘dumbed down’ audience during Zelensky’s speech at the UN” (StopFake, 2025). This enabled the identification of strategic objectives and counter-narratives shaping national and international opinion. Comparative analysis was used to compare the effectiveness of state institutions (CCD and StratCom) at macro- and micro-levels based on criteria such as mission, key achievements and narrative analysis.

The media analysis focused primarily on Telegram (n.d.) and X (n.d.), as they became decisive drivers of the

wartime transformation of the Ukrainian media landscape, replacing traditional news platforms. These platforms were selected due to their role as “meso-news spaces”: hybrid environments combining speed, mass reach and engagement, which are critical during crises. The case-study method examined specific crisis communication cases on Telegram (n.d.) and X (n.d.). Each case was treated as an autonomous analytical unit. This allowed the documentation of specific strategies, instruments (Telegram vs official websites, speed vs verification) and audience influence (national resilience, international mobilisation). This method was applied to the cases of Ukrainian media “Suspilne Media” (n.d.) and “Ukrainska Pravda” (n.d.). The analysed “Suspilne Media” materials included: “Russian troops launched more than 50 missiles and about 500 drones against Ukraine – Zelensky” (Svyrydiuk, 2025) and “Information that children in Sumy are being offered to assemble drones for money is fake” (Yukhta, 2025). For “Ukrainska Pravda”, the cases selected were: “Russians hit apartment building in Sloviansk: six injured” (Petrenko, 2025) and “Due to massive shelling in the morning, public transport will not operate in Lviv – Sadovyi” (Dyakonov, 2025). Case-study analysis was also used to document internal challenges (SLAPP lawsuits) – “The BIHUS.Info team won the case against the former deputy head of the Foreign Intelligence Service, Serhiy Semechko” (Zmina, 2025). Based on a comprehensive assessment of challenges, including the crisis communication paradox, practical recommendations were developed to enhance media-sector resilience, improve media literacy and neutralise manipulative meaning.

The interpretation of results was carried out within the framework of crisis communication theory and Resilience Theory (Copley, 2025), as well as through the lens of social constructivism. The observed patriotic framing was interpreted as effective crisis communication to achieve social cohesion (strengthening resilience) under existential threat. At the same time, the internal pressure on journalism (SLAPP) was viewed as a decline in democratic resilience, leading to the key conclusion of the study – the paradox of crisis communication. From a social constructivist perspective, the interpretation addressed not only factual content but also how those facts are socially constructed (for example, the portrayal of Ukraine as a victim of aggression) and public perception (uncertainty in top-down vs bottom-up communication), underscoring the significance of the psychosocial context of wartime conditions.

Results and Discussion

The full-scale Russian aggression marked a new phase in the history of social communication in Ukraine. The war has evolved into a conflict in which military operations are synchronised with large-scale psychological and information campaigns. In this context, crisis communication goes beyond traditional information dissemination. It serves a dual purpose: firstly, it provides the public

with urgent information necessary for survival (air raid alerts, evacuation routes, actions during shelling); secondly, it fosters the social and psychological resilience of the nation (dos Reis, 2025). The transformation of the Ukrainian media landscape was rapid. Traditional media (such as "1+1", "ICTV", "Ukraina") lost their dominant position to digital platforms. Independent channels in messaging apps, such as "Ukrainska Pravda" (n.d.) and "Suspilne Media" (n.d.) particularly Telegram (n.d.) and X (n.d.), took a leading role. These platforms offer rapid information dissemination but also create new ethical and verification challenges. This constant information flow underscores the deep sense of public uncertainty, which researchers distinguish into two main types of determination (dos Reis, 2025). Uncertainty stemming from institutional actors (top-down uncertainty) – caused by the actions and messages of authorities, political leaders, and official institutions. Uncertainty created by the environment itself (bottom-up uncertainty) – generated by the chaotic, fast, and unverified information circulating directly in social networks and messengers.

The introduction of martial law in 2022 necessitated the legal regulation of mass media operations. Although direct government censorship was not introduced, clear strategic limitations were established. In particular, the Order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine No. 73 (2022) became the main regulator for media operations in wartime conditions. It introduced a mechanism for the accreditation of journalists to access combat zones. A zoning system was established for media workers. Initially, a division into "green," "yellow," and "red" zones was frequently used, with journalists being strictly prohibited from working in the "red" zone. The order clearly outlined a list of prohibited (military-sensitive) information, the disclosure of which could harm the country's defense capabilities. This included: the names of military units and other military objects along with their geographic coordinates; the quantity of weaponry and military equipment and their storage locations; any information about operations (combat actions) being carried out or planned; and information about the movement and deployment of troops (including their names, numbers, and routes). These restrictions were intended to protect national security, but they also affected the boundaries of journalistic activities in frontline zones.

Crisis communication must take into account the deep psychological context of wartime. Society has undergone mass trauma: according to a study, the respondents reported nightmares related to shelling and bloodshed (Alexseev & Dembitskyi, 2022). According to a survey initiated by the Olena Zelenska Foundation and the Kyiv School of Economics with UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) support, by 2023, 40 percent of Ukrainian children showed symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (KSE, n.d.). This level of trauma, coupled with mass displacement (around ten million people were forced to leave their

homes), requires communication strategies to include an element of psychosocial support, fostering social cohesion and unity (de Rassenfosse *et al.*, 2023).

In the face of external aggression, Ukrainian media faced a profound ethical dilemma: how to balance professional standards of objectivity with the necessity of demonstrating patriotism in the face of national attack (Galchenko, 2024). Academic research from 2022-2025 acknowledges that this patriotic influence on the media landscape is contentious but inevitable in the context of an existential war. It was found that mainstream Ukrainian media show a patriotic bias, focusing on military actions and the country's successes. In contrast, less attention is paid to in-depth analysis of the internal political landscape or international relations, and the coverage of the opposing side of the conflict is often minimised. This bias is caused by the phenomenon of self-censorship. Journalists and editorial offices consciously limit the information they provide out of fear of "damaging the Ukrainian side" or adhering to editorial guidelines formed in wartime. This phenomenon becomes evident in the digital "meso-news spaces" (such as Telegram and X), where close interaction with the audience amplifies these ethical negotiations, encouraging selective news dissemination (Weimann-Saks *et al.*, 2025). On one hand, this patriotic bias is successful crisis communication because it effectively contributes to the social cohesion of society and strengthens its resilience against external threats (dos Reis, 2025). The media act as a mobilising factor. On the other hand, such narrative uniformity creates tension. An excessive focus on patriotism and self-censorship may undermine one of the key functions of democratic media – holding power accountable (dos Reis, 2025). This internal tension explains why independent journalism, despite its patriotic stance, often faces internal pressure in the form of lawsuits or covert surveillance by state or political actors. M.C. Stewart (2025) emphasised the importance of proactive social listening and sensitive engagement with social media during crises, highlighting its role in spreading accurate information and managing reputational threats. According to the researcher, to establish best strategic practices, organisations, institutions, and agencies are advised to recognise and consider how social networks can both act as crisis agents and serve as means of transmitting accurate and timely information to interested parties during crises. A similar view is expressed in the work of K.K. Stephens & B.W. Robertson (2022). Examining social communication during the Hurricane Harvey crisis, the researchers noted that various social media platforms allowed both official responders and special groups to effectively communicate, despite the lack of formal preparation, thus enhancing community engagement and information dissemination. This perspective is further supported by M. Ahmad *et al.* (2024), who stated that social media improves crisis communication by providing rapid information dissemination and encouraging

two-way communication. This transparency fosters trust, dispels rumours, and allows victims to share their experiences, thus humanising crises and effectively mobilising support. The results of this study align with the views of E.K. Özdemir (2024), who highlighted the importance of social media in crisis communication, particularly during the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes of 2023, in the context of information dissemination, combating disinformation, and enhancing user engagement, particularly regarding search-and-rescue efforts and reliable communication channels. P.R. Spence & X. Lin (2024) also pointed out that understanding how information spreads, or “information diffusion,” is a key aspect in studying the role of social media during the crisis lifecycle.

In response to the information aggression accompanying the full-scale invasion, Ukraine intensified the work of specialised state institutions. Among them, the Centre for countering disinformation (n.d.) under the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine and the Centre for strategic communications (n.d.) play a key role. These structures contribute significantly to strengthening Ukrainian society’s resilience and systematically countering Russian propaganda. Their activities include identifying enemy narratives, developing counter-narratives, and conducting public education campaigns. Table 1 provides a comparative analysis of the Centre for countering disinformation and StratCom at the macro level.

Table 1. Centre for countering disinformation (CCD) and StratCom: Achievements at the macro level

Aspect	CCD	StratCom
Main mission (general)	Enhancing national resilience, countering Russian propaganda.	Enhancing national resilience, developing effective state communications.
External contour (macro level)	Effective identification and structural analysis of enemy narratives (as a preventive tool for international partners).	Formation of a positive metaphorical image of Ukraine globally; working at the level of international relations and official state communications.
Internal contour (citizen activity)	Systematic publication of verified information (fact-checking) and identification of enemy narratives for debunking. Serves as an official source of credibility.	Development of counter-narratives and public education (as an active tool for influencing public opinion and strengthening morale).
Key success	Systematic publication of verified information, serving as an official source for media and partners.	Formation of a positive metaphorical image of Ukraine globally (indicating the effectiveness of work in international relations).

Source: compiled by the authors based on data from the Centre for strategic communications (n.d.), Centre For countering disinformation (n.d.)

The comparative analysis of the activities of the Centre for countering disinformation and StratCom (Table 1) differentiates their roles in countering information aggression, showing that these structures work according to the “defensive and offensive” principle. The Centre for countering disinformation performs a predominantly defensive function, focusing on internal contours and preventive actions. Its key success lies in the systematic publication of verified information and effective identification of enemy narratives (fact-checking), serving as an official source of credibility. In contrast, StratCom focuses on offensive functions and external contours, aiming to shape a positive metaphorical image of Ukraine globally and developing counter-narratives. Both institutions contribute to enhancing national resilience, with the Centre for countering disinformation responsible for deconstructing the enemy, while StratCom handles Ukraine’s image on the international stage.

The effectiveness of these institutions is confirmed by their success in external communication. The work of the Centre for countering disinformation and StratCom integrates successfully into the international information space. This enables strengthening support for Ukraine and forming a resilient image of the country as a victim of aggression, defending democratic values. Thus, the

strategy is effective in forming national and international narratives. However, despite progress in developing these initiatives, public awareness of the Centre for countering disinformation’s activities remains low. This indicates a gap between the strategy developed at the macro level and its actual effectiveness at the micro level of internal communication. State institutions, although successful in shaping national and international narratives (as evidenced by the positive metaphorical image of Ukraine globally), appear less adaptable to the dynamics of fast and informal “meso-news spaces” (such as Telegram and X) compared to the speed at which propaganda itself spreads (Farbman, 2023). To increase their influence, the strategies for dissemination need to be reconsidered, possibly through integration or collaboration with independent communication channels and OSINT groups (Open Source Intelligence), which have a higher level of reach in the digital environment. To bridge this gap and increase the impact of state institutions, a transition from a centralised to a networked communication model is required. The strategic goal is to transform the work of the Centre for countering disinformation/StratCom from a “counter-narrative development laboratory” into a “networked communication hub.” This requires two key steps: revising dissemination

strategies (integration into those channels where the audience spends the most time, instead of relying solely on official press releases and traditional media); and collaborating with independent channels (synergy between state structures and independent actors with higher digital reach) (Avrahami *et al.*, 2025).

Fact-checking has institutionalised and gained the status of a specialised professional activity (or a separate genre of journalism) as a response to large-scale information threats and disinformation campaigns characteristic of wartime conditions. Since the full-scale invasion (February 24, 2022), and up to 2024, professional fact-checking organisations around the world have published over 3,000 verifications related to the Russian-Ukrainian war. Among them are StopFake (n.d.), VoxCheck (n.d.), and Reuters Fact Check (n.d.). This demonstrates an unprecedented level of information flow and propaganda efforts (Dierickx & Lindén, 2024). For example, Reuters Fact Check's practice, as a global news agency, focuses on verifying primary sources and chronological context, which is critical in the information war. Reuters actively monitors social media (especially Telegram (n.d.), X (n.d.)), recognising them as key channels for the rapid spread of disinformation. This aligns with the general trend where traditional media must counter fake news circulating in "meso-news spaces". The analysis of the case "Fact Check: 2024 video of strikes on Kyiv falsely described as Russia retaliation to 2025 drone attack" (Reuters, 2025) shows that the main debunking technique is based on the time mismatch. The goal of the fact-check is to disprove the "cause-effect" connection. Reuters confirms the Ukrainian drone operation (providing context: "117 drones launched... at airbases"), but debunks the video sequence that was intended to confirm Russian retaliation, thus breaking the propaganda chain. Fake: the 2024 video is presented as a "response" from 2025 (Reuters Fact Check, n.d.). Reuters clearly establishes that the video showing rockets hitting central Kyiv in 2024 was mistakenly presented as Moscow's retaliation in June 2025. This is a basic but highly effective tool for counteraction, as propaganda often uses old or unrelated content to illustrate new events. Reuters analyses not only the fact itself but also the strategic narrative behind the fake. The narrative of the fake: "Russian retaliation" for a successful Ukrainian drone attack. Reuters uses official statements (Ukraine's claim of launching 117 drones) to establish the factual basis of the 2025 events, separating real events from false visual content spread on X (n.d.). Since Reuters is a global agency, its fact-checking has a broad international impact. This helps prevent the penetration of Russian propaganda narratives into Western media and political discourse. By publishing such debunks, Reuters not only exposes disinformation but also sets a professional standard for other media, showing that verifying chronology and context is essential, especially regarding visual content.

Professional fact-checking practices in Ukraine are characterised by methodological hybridisation. Fact-checkers are forced to combine traditional journalistic methods with advanced use of OSINT to work in conditions of limited resources and time, as well as amidst language barriers and geographical distances. When assessing the credibility of political information related to the conflict, fact-checkers use nine main grounds for evaluation. These include direct quoting/sourcing, metadata verification, reverse image search, analysis of linguistic context/terminology, geolocation verification, cross-checking, expert evaluation, checking official statements, and timeline/event sequence analysis. The most central criteria are the correctness of the information and the ability to verify the event itself. Also, important criteria include temporal and spatial compatibility, as well as comparison by similarities and differences (Savolainen, 2024). According to R. Savolainen (2024) research, the most popular sources of information used as evidence for confirming or disproving statements are government representatives' statements, videos and photos shared on social media, and materials from newspapers and television programmes. The high proportion of references to "government representatives' statements" as reliable evidence sources for verifying information highlights the structural dependence of the fact-checking system on official communication channels. This dependence is effective when social unity is high, but it creates potential vulnerability if trust in state institutions diminishes or political pressure increases. Therefore, ensuring transparency and accountability of state institutions becomes not only a political but also a critical factor in maintaining the effectiveness of countering disinformation.

The "Fake: Ukrainian TV channel 'dumbed down' audience during Zelensky's speech at the UN" (StopFake, 2025) case from the Ukrainian project "StopFake" serves as an example of institutionalised fact-checking practices aimed at countering coordinated information campaigns that use both visual manipulation and official propaganda channels. In this case, fact-checking was carried out by Ukrainian media and organisations (notably StopFake) in response to actions by pro-Russian channels and official figures (Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The fact-checking process began with recognising the strategic goal of the disinformation: the narrative – Ukrainian media allegedly "altered" the broadcast of Zelensky's speech at the UN General Assembly by "filling the hall", when in fact, "no one was there". The goal of the fake: to create the impression of decreased international support for Ukraine; to undermine trust in Ukrainian media by portraying them as a "factory of lies". Distribution channels: pro-Russian Telegram channels, anonymous social media pages, and official persons (Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Maria Zakharova). Disproving this fake required a combination of visual and contextual verification (Table 2).

Table 2. Case analysis of "StopFake"

Fact-checking method	Application in case	Evidence
Source verification	Checking the original footage broadcast during the Ukrainian telethon.	"Unified News" (e.g., on 1+1 channel). It was found that Ukrainian media showed the real broadcast, and no "added" viewers were present.
Analysis of visual evidence (forensic media expertise)	Analysing the fake video.	A segment with "added" viewers was found to be a montage and forgery.
Verification of timeline and identifiers	Comparing original broadcast with fake video.	The original had the UN logo and Ukrainian audio track, whereas the fake lacked these elements, and the speech was in English.
Comprehensive verification (networked)	StopFake checked stories from other Ukrainian media (including screenshots from TSN YouTube and Suspilne YouTube).	Confirmed that other Ukrainian media also showed the real broadcast of the hall.
Contextual verification (normalisation)	Explaining UN's usual practice.	Emphasised that it is normal for the hall not to be full during speeches, and this does not indicate a lack of interest.

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of the StopFake (2025)

In a crisis situation, the fact-checking practice examined in this case operates along several key directions. It involves multi-faceted verification that goes beyond simple disproving. Fact-checkers perform comprehensive analysis, comparing original elements such as logos and broadcast languages with falsified visual or audio inserts. This process is made possible through institutional cooperation: the involvement of StopFake and the verification of materials from key Ukrainian media outlets (including 1+1, Suspilne, TSN) confirms that the media community has a networked, coordinated system for responding to disinformation. Finally, fact-checking is not limited to technical verification but includes exposing motives. It constantly reminds the public of the strategic goal behind such fakes – undermining trust in Ukrainian media and justifying the aggressor's propaganda. Such a coordinated and multi-layered practice is vital in a crisis situation, as it protects institutional trust in Ukrainian media and the international image of the country from coordinated information attacks.

Suspilne Media (n.d.) is a public broadcaster whose crisis communication was based on the principles of stability, verification, and national unity. Its activities confirm that, in chaos, a crisis creates a demand for institutional reliability. In the early days of the invasion, when speed was a priority, Suspilne consciously focused on reliability, acting as an "anchor" source. Its regional branches became the only source of information on the ground, creating local social capital of trust. While the general telethon "Unified News" was criticised for lack of pluralism, for Suspilne, it became a platform for ensuring continuous, verified information and maintaining national informational cohesion. Suspilne's social communications were aimed at reaching all groups: from news Telegram channels (quick but restrained headlines) to TikTok content (educational content, debunking fakes) and YouTube channels (in-depth reports and documentaries). Regular publication of reports on activities, funding, and fact-checking fakes maintained the image of an independent, taxpayer-funded institution that provides operational countermeasures to

disinformation (fact-checking) and illustrates how state institutions (in this case, the Centre for countering disinformation) use social communication in crisis situations. Case: "Information that children in sumy are being offered to assemble drones for money is fake" (Yukhta, 2025) reflects the work with a highly emotionally charged propaganda narrative that has the potential for international discreditation. Russian Telegram channels circulated an announcement in Sumy, where children were offered summer jobs – assembling drones for money. The goal of this narrative was to discredit the Ukrainian Armed Forces and Ukraine, creating an image of a state that involves children in military activities (violating international humanitarian law). Justifying aggression – legitimising Russian strikes on civilian infrastructure under the guise of fighting "military objects" (even if it's a school or children's club). The Centre for countering disinformation (CCD) applied an operational and direct debunking model (fact-check), which is key in combating rapidly spreading fakes in social media. A quick response was needed before the fake gained mass traction in the Ukrainian Telegram segment. CCD specialists quickly identified the fake in Russian channels and published a debunk that was quickly disseminated by Ukrainian media, including Suspilne. In crisis communication, response time directly correlates with the effectiveness of countermeasures: using evidence and logic. The debunk had two clear lines of evidence: Technical Verification (Physical Evidence) – no such announcements existed in Sumy, the phone number listed in the announcement was invalid; Poor Quality of Execution – characterising the fake as "low-quality" diminishes its credibility in the eyes of the audience and highlights the unprofessionalism of the propagandists. Exposing the true strategic aim of disinformation enhances the media literacy of the public. Citizens learn not just to ignore the fake but to understand why it was created, thus increasing their resilience to further manipulation.

Case: "Russian troops launched more than 50 missiles and about 500 drones against Ukraine – Zelensky" (Svyrydiuk, 2025) is an example of rapid communication

in a critical crisis situation to achieve three key objectives: informing citizens, mobilising international support, and forming a unified national narrative. Volodymyr Zelensky's

communication on the X (Twitter) platform the morning after the enemy's airstrike and its retransmission by Suspilne had several communication goals (Table 3).

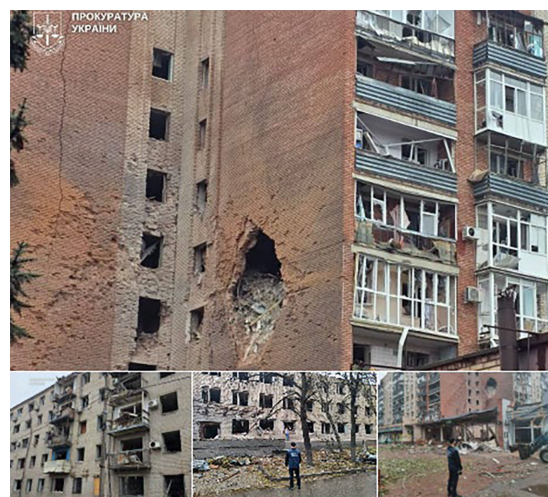
Table 3. Social communication goals in the case of "Russian troops launched more than 50 missiles and about 500 drones against Ukraine – Zelensky"	
Communication goal	Description
Internal audience (national resilience)	Confirming the fact and scale of the attack (more than 50 missiles and 500 drones), removing panic and speculation. Demonstrating control (reports from leaders, ongoing work) and empathy (number of deaths and injuries).
External audience (international mobilisation)	Arguing for military assistance. Specific figures and a list of affected regions serve as the evidence base for calls to accelerate the supply of air defense systems.
Narrative formation	Emphasising civilian infrastructure. Highlighting that the attacks were aimed at "infrastructure that ensures normal life for people", reinforcing the terrorist nature of Russia's actions and strengthening Ukraine's image as a victim of aggression.

Source: compiled by the authors

The use of the X platform (n.d.) is not coincidental and is characteristic of modern crisis communication. X is both a meso-news space for instant communication with foreign journalists, politicians, and thought leaders. Unlike a long press release, a tweet is a concentrated message. The message contains clear figures and geography, lending documentary credibility to the information. The tone is serious and decisive but without excessive emotionalism. The president publishes the full details of the attack first, seizing the initiative from the enemy and preventing Russian propaganda from creating its own distorted versions of "destroyed military headquarters." The most important element of the social communication is the political conclusion formulated as a strategic presupposition: implicitly establishing a causal link between the unilateral cessation of hostilities in the airspace and the potential initiation of an effective diplomatic process. This phrase serves as a communication counter-narrative in response to calls for negotiations. It clearly articulates the position: diplomacy cannot be discussed while Ukraine is under mass attack. This case demonstrates that, in a crisis situation, the social communication of a state leader is not just information dissemination, but a tool of foreign policy and national mobilisation, using the speed of digital platforms to establish control over the narrative.

Ukrainska Pravda (UP) (n.d.) functions in Ukraine as an online publication whose crisis communication focuses on speed and maintaining the "watchdog" function over the government. Key social communication strategies include: dominance in Telegram as the main channel of communication in Ukraine. Its success is based on the speed of information dissemination, often being the first to publish news about attacks, government decisions, or personnel changes. This made UP a "digital news hub"; the integration of speed and depth (UP successfully combined fast publication in Telegram with subsequent in-depth investigations and analytics on its main website). This dual-channel communication satisfied both the need for instant "meso-news" and the need for verified context; accountability communication (even in wartime,

UP maintained and intensified its focus on anti-corruption investigations and coverage of internal political conflicts). This communication created the impression that civil society and governmental oversight had not ceased, which is crucial for democracy in times of crisis. UP acted as a "digital frontline reporter" and "citizen control tool," ensuring the public received immediate information about what was happening and how the government was fulfilling its promises. Case: "Russians hit apartment building in Sloviansk: six injured" (Petrenko, 2025) is a classic example of how independent Ukrainian media (in line with the "Ukrainska Pravda" model) use convergent journalism for effective social communication in a crisis. Communication is based on a two-step model: instant response in Telegram (speed) and detailed verification on the main website (depth and verification). Communication as meso-news in Telegram (Fig. 1).



У Слов'янську на Донеччині внаслідок влучання у будинок пізно ввечері у суботу [поранено](#) 6 цивільних, серед яких неповнолітній

VII підписатися

11.7K 10:42

Figure 1. Ukrainska Pravda's news on Telegram
Source: screenshot from the R. Petrenko (2025)

Figure 1 shows the emergency headline: "Russia strikes apartment building in Sloviansk: six injured," which provides immediate information and confirms the fact of the attack. This is crucial for seizing the narrative from the enemy and preventing panic or speculation. The location, time (late Saturday evening), and initial casualty numbers (6 injured, including a minor) meet the audience's urgent need for information about the danger. The source of information is the Donetsk Regional Prosecutor's Office. Even at the speed stage, the media refers to an official source, immediately providing credibility to the information and distinguishing it from anonymous public groups. The main website, where this article appeared, serves the

function of verification, detailing, and documenting the military crime, and includes more detailed information (Table 4).

The Sloviansk strike case illustrates how social communication in a crisis achieves maximum effectiveness through a dual-channel strategy: Telegram (speed) provides immediate awareness, boosts morale, and prevents panic. The main website (depth) ensures verification, documentation (FAB-250, exact injuries), and accountability (prosecutor's office), turning the instant news into an archival evidence of a military crime. This combination is the foundation of convergent journalism during wartime, when media serve not only as reporters but also as documenters and tools for accountability.

Table 4. Case analysis of "Russians hit apartment building in Sloviansk: six injured" on "Ukrainska Pravda" official page

Communication element	Purpose in crisis	Impact on social communication
Crime detail	Exact type of weapon: FAB-250 bombs (high-explosive aerial bombs) with UMPC (unified planning and correction module).	Converts the general "attack" into a specific war crime. This technical detail is important for international investigations and the evidence base.
Humanisation (humane aspect)	Age and gender of the injured (two women aged 60 and 70, three men aged 31, 41, and 57, and a minor boy).	This "humanisation" of the crisis. Communication highlights that civilians in their homes were injured, which amplifies emotional response and international solidarity.
Damage assessment	At least 26 buildings and more than 20 cars were damaged.	Provides a complete picture of the destruction, which is important for documenting the damage and subsequent restoration.
Legal qualification	The announcement from the prosecutor's office means an investigation has begun.	Communication creates a sense of accountability and proves that the state is documenting every crime, which is critical for national resilience.

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of the R. Petrenko (2025)

Case: "Due to massive shelling in the morning, public transport will not operate in Lviv – Sadovyi" (Dyakonov, 2025) is an example of local government (LGU) crisis communication under direct threat. It demonstrates how the mayor uses

social communication to ensure citizens' safety, demonstrate control, and maintain trust. Andriy Sadovyi's communication is a direct response to the threat and adheres to the key principles of crisis management (Table 5).

Table 5. Case analysis of "Due to massive shelling in the morning, public transport will not operate in Lviv – Sadovyi"

Communication element	Communication strategy	Purpose in crisis
Urgent channel	Use of social media or instant messaging (like Telegram/X) that directly reaches media.	Ensures immediate speed of response (message at 7:04, explosions at 6:36).
Clear fact	"Lviv public transport will temporarily not operate."	Delivers a clear decision and instruction to citizens, preventing chaos and reducing the number of people on the streets.
Justification	"Due to massive enemy attack" and "while danger persists."	Demonstrates control of the situation by the authorities and justifies the inconvenient decision (no transport) as a priority for safety.
Call to action	"I urge residents to stay safe! It is dangerous to go out on the streets now!"	Performs a mobilisation function (stay sheltered) and reinforces the feeling of care from the authorities.

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of the I. Dyakonov (2025)

Journalistic coverage plays a significant role in regulating this information. The media pick up the mayor's direct speech and add official details from the Air Forces (time of explosions, missile types: "Kinzhal", strike UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), and time of attack (06:55)).

This transforms the mayor's personal address into an official news item with verified context. The confirmation of scale – the mention of attacks by different missile types and drones – confirms the severity of the threat, justifying the decisive decision to stop transport. Local

government communication in this case directly impacts social resilience: maintaining trust (clarity, speed, and public justification of the transport shutdown decision strengthens trust in local authorities as an institution that prioritises citizens' lives over economic activity); avoiding panic (by providing official information about restrictions, the authorities prevent the spread of unverified rumours about the scale of the destruction or the duration of the danger). LGU communication in a crisis situation is effective when it is timely, empathetic, and contains concrete instructions. The Mayor of Lviv acted as a crisis manager, and the media provided immediate and contextual retransmission of his decision.

Telegram has become a key communication channel during the war. It can be conceptualised as a "meso-news space" – a hybrid environment that combines intimate (personal chats) and collective (large channels) communication. According to D. Weimann-Saks *et al.* (2025), this space fosters sustainable mutual exchange between journalists and their audience, creating a high level of trust and engagement. However, this intimacy also generates complex ethical challenges. Telegram channels show a heightened tendency towards selective information dissemination and self-censorship (Farbman, 2023). Journalists working in these environments often engage in complex ethical negotiations about what information can be published without harming national interests. Given the lack of clear regulatory frameworks, there is a need to develop voluntary self-regulation mechanisms or introduce transparent verified labeling systems for channels adhering to professional ethics (Weimann-Saks *et al.*, 2025). Social media platforms, including X and Telegram, are battlefields for propaganda and anti-systemic communications. To understand public sentiments and adapt communication strategies, monitoring systems (e.g., YouScan) are used to collect and analyse posts (Farbman, 2023).

Despite the high level of social cohesion and success in countering external disinformation, the independent Ukrainian media community has faced internal pressure during 2022-2025. One of the threats is the use of SLAPP

lawsuits against investigative journalists. Examples such as the long legal proceedings against Bihus.Info (Zmina, 2022) demonstrate systemic attempts to silence critical voices. These lawsuits, initiated by influential political or business actors, often demand significant moral damages and lead to temporary freezing of media accounts, exhausting their financial and time resources (Freedom of expression, 2025). This case is an example of legal pressure classified as a SLAPP lawsuit (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation), whose aim is not necessarily to win but to deplete journalists' financial and time resources. Conclusion for journalism: the victory of Bihus.Info in the Supreme Court became an important precedent that strengthened the fundamental conditions for investigative journalism and affirmed its right to cover issues related to the activities of high-ranking officials. Communicative effect: the case confirmed that independent media performing the watchdog function (monitoring power) can successfully resist legal pressure from political elites, which is critically important.

There have also been reports of direct pressure and obstruction, including probable unauthorised surveillance of editorial offices (e.g., Bihus.Info by the SBU (Security Service of Ukraine) in 2024) and campaigns of discreditation by political actors. The lack of significant public response to these incidents by law enforcement or parliamentary committees undermines trust in the structures responsible for ensuring information security. This internal pressure points to a deep conflict that can be called the "Resilience Dialectic". On the one hand, Ukrainian crisis communication has been successful in creating high social resilience and unity (e.g., through a patriotic bias and a positive international image) (Stepanov *et al.*, 2025). On the other hand, the pressure on journalists and SLAPP lawsuits indicate a decline in democratic resilience and accountability. Society's resilience cannot be complete if it does not include the protection of internal freedom of speech and control over power. Key challenges to the activities of independent journalism are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6. Key challenges for independent journalism in Ukraine (2022-2025)

Type of pressure	Manifestations and examples	Systemic impact
Legal pressure (SLAPPs)	Long legal proceedings, demands for moral damages (>500,000 UAH), temporary account freezes (e.g., Bihus.Info cases, Yuriy Nikolov).	Exhaustion of financial and time resources, a systematic attempt to silence critical voices.
Patriotic pressure/self-censorship	Fear of harming the Ukrainian side, leading to a focus on military successes and ignoring internal political problems.	Strengthened self-censorship, distortion of objectivity, one-sided coverage.
State obstacles	Reports of surveillance (SBU), discreditation campaigns by political actors, lack of response to appeals to NACP/parliamentary committees.	Undermines trust in state structures responsible for information security.
Professional challenges	Resource and time constraints for fact-checking, psychological impact from violent content and persecution.	Decreased speed and quality of information verification, professional burnout.

Source: compiled by the authors based on V. Stepanov *et al.* (2025), Freedom of expression (2025)

One of the most successful aspects of crisis communication is the mobilisation of civil society. Volunteer organisations and new social movements play a central role in enhancing community resilience, providing not only material assistance but also psychosocial support, and actively participating in countering disinformation (dos Reis, 2025). At the educational level, the war required an immediate transformation of journalism education. Educational institutions were forced to adapt to new realities, cultivating critical thinking and media literacy among students in response to intensified propaganda (Fialka & Kornieva, 2024). The educational process faced challenges, including physical security threats to participants, large-scale internal and external displacement of students (affecting about ten million people), and critical destruction of educational infrastructure. This necessitated the urgent adaptation of educational strategies and the use of distance learning formats to ensure the continuity of education in the crisis.

International cooperation is essential for supporting the media sector. Research emphasised by L. Dierickx & C.-G. Lindén (2024) shows that international support networks and collaboration help fact-checkers overcome resource limitations, time constraints, and language barriers in combating Russian propaganda. For example, Ukrainian fact-checking organisations such as VoxCheck (n.d.) and StopFake (n.d.) regularly receive funding from international donors, such as USAID (Agency for International Development) and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). At the legislative level, Ukraine continues to demonstrate a reformist impulse, supported by international partners, particularly the Council of Europe. This includes the practical implementation of the Law of Ukraine No. 2849-IX (2022), the Law of Ukraine No. 540/97-VR (1997), and expanding efforts on media literacy and countering disinformation. The Ukrainian Law of Ukraine No. 2849-IX (2022) is part of the Eurointegration reforms, harmonising Ukrainian legislation with the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council 2010/13/EU (2010). The law establishes a clear regulatory system for all types of media (print, online, audiovisual), ensures ownership transparency, improves registration procedures, and grants the National Council of Ukraine for Television and Radio Broadcasting broad powers for oversight and monitoring, which is critical for countering the spread of hostile propaganda. The Law of Ukraine No. 540/97-VR (1997), adopted during full-scale aggression, focuses on ensuring the resilience of the media sector. It provides mechanisms for state financial support to media outlets that have suffered damage due to the war and strengthens the social and legal protection of journalists, recognising their role as critically important workers in a conflict. An important element is also the activation of efforts to address SLAPP lawsuits through legislative proposals and alignment with international standards, according to Directive (EU) 2024/1069 of the European Parliament

and of the Council (2024). The European Parliament and Council Directive aims to protect journalists and human rights defenders from obviously unfounded or malicious legal proceedings (SLAPPs) used to intimidate and obstruct their professional activities. The implementation of the provisions of this Directive in Ukraine is significant for guaranteeing professional media freedom and preventing censorship through economic and legal pressure, which is a necessary condition for strengthening the resilience of the democratic media space.

Research on the functioning of social communications in the Ukrainian media landscape during the full-scale war (2022-2025) reveals the paradox of crisis communication. On the one hand, Ukrainian media and state institutions have achieved high efficiency in creating social cohesion (through a patriotic bias) and mobilising international support. On the other hand, this effectiveness is accompanied by a decline in democratic resilience at the internal level, manifested by increased pressure on investigative journalism through SLAPP lawsuits and other forms of obstruction (Galchenko, 2024; Stepanov *et al.*, 2025). Furthermore, a significant information gap has been identified: despite the recognised contribution of state institutions, such as the Centre for countering disinformation, public awareness of their initiatives remains low. This indicates that state communication strategies are insufficiently adapted to the dynamics of fast and hybrid digital platforms (Telegram, X), which are the main sources of information for the population.

According to the results of the current study, crises exacerbate existing societal problems, prompting a reevaluation of social structures and relationships. Accordingly, social cohesion may either weaken or strengthen in response to crises, influenced by various factors such as emotions, institutional rules, and collective behaviour. A related position is expressed in the study by X. Ge & Y. Hou (2025). The researchers noted that public crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, enhance alignment with collective behaviour, as reflected in the higher number of purchases of the most popular and highly-rated items, which mirrors the adaptive social dynamics during survival challenges. D. Dijkzeul & I. Franzke (2022) state that the nature of social cohesion as an abstract umbrella concept, which allows for many different types of activities, is different. On the one hand, social cohesion, as a flexible concept, can create direction and synergy between very different types of activities, thus providing a useful impetus for approaches to peacebuilding and resilience in humanitarian work and cooperative development. On the other hand, international organisations are limited by their mandates and are unlikely to establish security, strengthen statehood, etc. Based on the research conducted, Table 7 presents recommendations for enhancing social communication during a crisis in Ukraine and globally.

Table 7. Recommendations for state institutions on improving crisis communication effectiveness

Category of recommendation	Target audience	Specific measures and tools	Expected outcome
I. State institutions (CPD, Stratcom)	Internal communication, increasing public awareness.	1. Enhance integration with "meso-news spaces": Develop collaboration tools and use verified channels in Telegram and other messengers for rapid counter-narrative dissemination.	Overcome the gap between macro- and micro-level communication; match the speed of counter-narrative dissemination with that of propaganda.
	Maintaining government accountability and protecting critical journalism.	2. Legislative Protection of Freedom of Speech: Accelerate the adoption of comprehensive anti-SLAPP legislation. Ensure transparent investigations of pressures on journalists (Bihus.Info, Yuriy Nikolov).	Ensure accountability during wartime; guarantee fundamental conditions for investigative journalism.
II. Media community and professional standards	Journalists, fact-checkers, independent researchers.	3. Institutionalisation of OSINT and Fact-Checking: Implement advanced open-source intelligence methods (e.g., as in InformNapalm, DeepState). Establish standards for verifying the temporal and spatial compatibility of social media content.	Improve information reliability; ensure professional verification in a hybrid war environment.
	Journalism education and the general public.	4. Media Literacy and Education: Scale up educational programmes, transform journalism education with a focus on critical thinking.	Enhance society's resilience to informational manipulation; create a long-term strategic tool against adaptive propaganda.
	Digital platforms, telegram channels.	5. Create Ethical Frameworks for Digital Platforms: Develop voluntary self-regulation frameworks and ethical guidelines tailored to "meso-news spaces" (especially Telegram).	Minimise self-censorship and increase trust in verified media channels in informal environments.

Source: compiled by the authors based on A. Galchenko (2024), L. Derviş (2024), V. Stepanov *et al.* (2025)

The analysis of the presented recommendations confirms a systematic approach to strengthening Ukraine's information resilience, requiring convergence of efforts between the state and the media community. The recommendations focus on overcoming two key challenges: the technological gap and the democratic deficit. Overcoming the technological gap involves integration into Telegram to match the speed of countering propaganda, as well as institutionalising OSINT and fact-checking to improve information reliability. At the same time, to maintain democratic resilience, critical actions include legislative protection of journalism through anti-SLAPP mechanisms (to ensure accountability) and scaling up media literacy (to form critical thinking in society as long-term protection). Thus, the proposed measures create a model where state institutions are responsible for operational efficiency and security, while the media community is responsible for accuracy and self-regulation in the context of hybrid warfare.

The analysis of the research materials shows that Russia's full-scale aggression transformed Ukraine's social communications, turning them into a key element of national resilience, where crisis communication serves a dual purpose: providing operational survival information and forming psychosocial unity for the nation. While state institutions (CPD, StratCom) have succeeded in shaping a positive international image and countering external disinformation, their effectiveness at the internal level is limited by a significant information gap and low adaptability to fast "meso-news spaces" (Telegram, X). This technological challenge is accompanied by

the dialectic of resilience: high social cohesion through patriotic bias contradicts the internal decline in democratic resilience, manifested by pressure on investigative journalism (SLAPP lawsuits, obstruction). To overcome these challenges, a transition from a centralised to a networked communication hub is needed, which integrates OSINT and fact-checking to improve information reliability and implements anti-SLAPP legislation to ensure accountability, thereby strengthening both information and democratic resilience.

Conclusions

The results of the empirical study revealed the dialectical tension in the functioning of social communications in Ukraine during the period 2022-2025, articulated as a paradox of crisis communication. On the one hand, it was determined that Ukrainian media and state institutions (Centre for countering disinformation, strategic communications, leader communication) have achieved high efficiency in providing operational information for survival (air alarms, actions during shelling) and forming social and psychological resilience of the nation. In this context, it was found that this is achieved through the patriotic bias of the media, which acts as a mobilising factor, and through the success of external communication by state institutions, which have formed a positive metaphorical image of Ukraine in the world and effectively counter external disinformation. Cases of convergent journalism ("Ukrainska Pravda") and institutional reliability ("Suspilne") demonstrated adaptation to the dynamics of "meso-news spaces"

(Telegram, X) for rapid information dissemination and documentation of war crimes.

At the same time, the research revealed a decline in democratic resilience at the internal level. This tension is expressed in internal pressure on independent journalism, particularly through the use of SLAPP lawsuits against investigative journalists and cases of covert surveillance. It was concluded that such narrative monolithism, reinforced by self-censorship and legal pressure, undermines a key function of democratic media – control over power and ensuring accountability. Furthermore, a significant information gap was identified: the effectiveness of the Centre for countering disinformation and strategic communications at the macro-level (international narratives) contrasts with their low public awareness and insufficient adaptability to the speed of information dissemination in digital environments (Telegram, X), limiting their impact at the micro-level. This became the basis for the conclusion that a shift from a centralised model to a networked communications hub is necessary.

As part of the current research, the effectiveness of using digital platforms (Telegram, X) for operational leadership, mobilising international support, and providing specific instructions to citizens was identified. The analysis of materials from "Ukrainska Pravda" and "Suspilne" confirmed convergent journalism as the dominant model, where speed in Telegram and X is combined with depth and verification on main websites, ensuring both timeliness and documentation of war crimes. The study of the "StopFake" and "Reuters Fact Check" cases enabled the justification of the role of methodological hybridisation (combining journalistic methods with OSINT) in countering coordinated information campaigns, where the key debunking tool is the verification of the temporal

and spatial compatibility of content. These cases clearly demonstrated that media serve not only as reporters but also as documenters and tools for accountability. To address the identified paradox and strengthen Ukraine's information resilience, the research developed systemic recommendations focusing on overcoming two key challenges: technological gaps and democratic deficits. The proposed measures create a model where state institutions are responsible for operational efficiency and security, while the media community is responsible for accuracy and self-regulation, ensuring accountability of power.

Limitations of this study arose from its qualitative nature due to the lack of quantitative sociological data on trust in media or public awareness of the Centre for countering disinformation, as well as the limited list of social networks used for social communication. Future research should focus on quantitative studies of the effectiveness of the Centre for countering disinformation/strategic communications at the micro-level (trust and public awareness), comparative analysis of the impact of anti-SLAPP legislation on journalistic activity in Ukraine and EU countries, and studies on the integration mechanisms of OSINT groups into state communication processes to create a "networked communications hub".

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Соціальні комунікації в кризових ситуаціях на прикладі українських медіа 2022-2025 років

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Анотація. Метою цього дослідження було оцінити механізми комунікації в медіапросторі під час повномасштабної російської агресії (2022-2025 рр.). Було застосовано комплексну методологію, що поєднує інституційний і нарративний аналіз, а також детальний кейс-стаді підхід, зосереджений на матеріалах провідних медіа, державних інституцій і фактчекінгових організацій, а також на аналізі регуляторних документів. Основним результатом дослідження стало виявлення діалектичної напруги між високою соціальною стійкістю та зниженням демократичної підзвітності в практиках кризової комунікації. Дослідження показало, що українські медіа забезпечують оперативне оновлення інформації та посилюють соціальну згуртованість завдяки патріотичному фреймінгу й конвергентній журналістиці (поєднання швидкості Telegram і X із верифікацією інформації). Водночас було виявлено внутрішній тиск на незалежну журналістику через SLAPP-позови та самоцензуру, що підриває її наглядову функцію. Встановлено суттєвий інформаційний розрив: попри досягнення Центру протидії дезінформації та Центру стратегічних комунікацій на макрорівні (міжнародні наративи), їхня ефективність на внутрішньому мікрорівні залишається обмеженою через низьку адаптивність до «мезо-новинних просторів». Дослідження також обґрунтувало роль методологічної гібридизації у практиках фактчекінгу. Отримані результати свідчать, що подолання цього парадоксу потребує переходу від централізованої до мережевої моделі комунікації та усунення технологічних розривів і демократичних дефіцитів. Практична значущість дослідження полягає в тому, що його результати можуть бути використані стейкхолдерами для посилення інформаційної та демократичної стійкості України в умовах війни

Ключові слова: соціальна стійкість; дезінформація; мезо-новинний простір; фактчекінг; конвергентна журналістика; фейк