



## Convergent journalism of Ukrainian online media in the context of full-scale wars

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**Abstract.** The purpose of the study was to determine the specifics of the functioning of convergent journalism of Ukrainian online media and its role in ensuring effective communication in the context of military conflict. The research methodology combined comparative, contextual, and structural functional analysis of open sources, industry monitoring, and survey results. The findings showed that the war accelerated the process of convergence, transforming it from an innovative practice to the normal functioning of the media, while changing the nature of the professional roles of journalists, combining the functions of a reporter, analyst, and multimedia producer. It was found that Telegram became the dominant channel of operational information, YouTube serves as contextualisation and explanation of events, and websites provide archiving and verification of analytical content. The analysis showed that multimedia formats have increased interactivity and audience engagement, while creating mechanisms for cognitive protection against misinformation. It was investigated that professional standards of journalism have undergone adaptation, in particular, a shift from the traditional principle of verification before publication to operational publication with subsequent verification and the use of open source tools to confirm facts. The results of the study showed that convergent journalism of Ukrainian online media takes place to ensure information stability and effective management of public communication during the war. It was proved that the transformation of professional standards and platform differentiation of media created a comprehensive system of interaction between editorial offices and the audience. The practical significance of the results obtained lies in their orientation to editorial teams, media experts, and public communication bodies to improve the effectiveness of information policy and media security in crisis conditions

**Keywords:** verification; trust level; integration; disinformation; social networks; communication

### Introduction

The full-scale war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine has transformed the national media system, actualising convergent journalism as a mechanism for the functioning of online media in the face of an existential threat.

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In the face of constant military risks, information attacks, limited resources, and a growing public demand for operational, reliable, and explanatory information, digital media are forced to simultaneously rebuild editorial processes, professional roles of journalists and communication strategies. Convergence in these conditions takes on social and communication significance, turning into a tool for ensuring information stability, countering disinformation, and supporting public mobilisation. That is why the study of convergent journalism of Ukrainian online media in the context of a full-scale war appears as a scientifically and socially significant problem that requires a comprehensive interdisciplinary understanding.

In scientific studies, the problems of convergent journalism in crisis and conflict contexts were revealed from various analytical standpoints. L. Ngobeni (2024) investigated the impact of multimedia content integration on the effectiveness of news materials and proved that the combination of video, audio, and infographics increased audience accessibility and engagement. The researcher analysed the practices of News24 and SABC (South African Broadcasting Corporation) and showed that multimedia convergence contributed to the development of an immersive narrative, while the dominance of text formats limited the depth of coverage. S. Almakaty (2025) analysed the mechanisms of moderation of disinformation in war conditions and revealed an increase in the effectiveness of hybrid content verification systems that combined artificial intelligence and human expertise. The researcher proved that local adaptation of algorithms and cross-platform fact-checking significantly increased the accuracy of detecting manipulative content. There was an increase in the problem of merging state propaganda with viral organic content, which complicated the process of distinguishing information threats. The study by V. Navumau & O. Matveeva (2025) conceptualised Telegram as "infrastructure in action", analysing its use by the military, volunteers, and diaspora during the war. The study showed that the platform's technical affordances provided high-speed communication, coordination, and psychological support in dangerous situations. Moreover, the researchers identified structural risks associated with the spread of disinformation, surveillance, and social polarisation through opaque moderation.

L. Lysenko (2024) analysed the use of user content in military journalism and showed that materials from Telegram and Facebook became a source of operational information from inaccessible territories. The researcher proved that the active involvement of UGC (User-Generated Content) contributed to the democratisation of the media field and increased the speed of information. Moreover, an increase in the risks of unreliability and manipulation was recorded, which actualised the need to develop legal and technological verification standards. Y. Gunawan *et al.* (2023) examined systemic violations of journalists' rights in armed conflicts and proved that non-compliance with international humanitarian law

was structural rather than accidental. The researchers analysed the gap between the declared international standards for the protection of journalists and the practice of their implementation. It was concluded that the digitalisation of war has increased the vulnerability of journalists, expanding the range of threats from physical violence to cyber attacks. M. Zahoor & N. Sadiq (2021) analysed the impact of digital platforms on the transformation of journalism in conflict regions and proved that social networks have radically changed the structure of communications. The researchers showed that instant dissemination of information and new tools for monitoring events significantly expanded the capabilities of journalists. Moreover, an increase in information noise and a decrease in reliability control were recorded.

The study by A.M. Stancu (2023) analysed the practices of Romanian public television and proved that coverage of the war in Ukraine was a catalyst for the transition to hybrid forms of content. The researcher showed that the combination of professional journalistic narratives with amateur videos and multi-platform distribution of materials contributed to an increase in the speed and authenticity of communication. It was concluded that convergent practices have transformed not only news formats, but also the logic of interaction with the audience. V.V. Georhiiivska *et al.* (2024) analysed the challenges for Ukrainian journalism and media security in the face of full-scale aggression. The researchers classified the main methods of information attacks and established a direct link between disinformation and threats to the physical safety of journalists. The study also analysed national and international legal mechanisms for countering information threats. As a result, the thesis that media security is a component of national security and critical thinking of society was substantiated.

The complex understanding of convergent journalism of Ukrainian online media as an integral social and communication model of functioning in a full-scale war remained insufficiently systematised in the scientific discourse. The purpose of the study was to analyse the features of the functioning of convergent journalism in Ukrainian online media and its role in ensuring effective social communication in crisis conditions. Within the framework of achieving this goal, the task was set to characterise the convergent practices of Ukrainian online media, analyse editorial strategies and organisational transformations, and determine the social and communication function of convergent journalism in a society at war.

## Materials and Methods

The methodological design of the study was formed considering the specifics of the study of convergent journalism in a full-scale war and was based on a combination of analytical descriptive, and structural and functional approaches. The time frame of the study covered the period 2022-2025, which corresponded to the phase of active transformation of the media system of Ukraine

under martial law. The methodological tools of the study included comparative analysis, contextual analysis, structural and functional approach, and systematisation method. The material basis of the study consisted of open analytical reports, results of opinion polls and industry monitoring of international and national organisations, which systematically record the parameters of media consumption, the level of trust in news, and structural changes in the media market of Ukraine in the conditions of war. In particular, data from the European Federation of Journalists (2024) was used to characterise general trends in the digital news environment, materials from the Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine (Suspilne) (2025) were used to outline the characteristics of news consumption by Ukrainian audiences, and the findings of Edelman (2024) – to operationalise the category of trust in the media. To analyse the transformation of the media landscape and the conditions of functioning of editorial offices during the war period, monitoring data from the Institute of Mass Information (IMI) (2024) on the sources of origin of news content and Newsroom (2023) materials were used, which record a decrease in the number of media as a result of a full-scale war. The choice of these sources was determined by their empirical orientation, regularity of publications, and direct relevance to the Ukrainian context, without extrapolating data from other information environments. For certain aspects related to the structure of information consumption by Ukrainian audiences outside the country, materials were used Society for Social Research and Statistical Analyses Ltd. (2023), which allowed considering the transnational dimension of the Ukrainian information space.

Comparative analysis was used to compare the roles of different digital platforms in the structure of convergent journalism. The criteria for this comparison were the level of integration of the platform into editorial processes, the functional purpose of the communication channel, the type of content that prevails, and the nature of interaction with the audience. Within this approach, Telegram (n.d.) was analysed as a news distribution messenger and YouTube (n.d.) as a video platform. Contextual analysis was used to interpret statistical indicators of reach, engagement, and trust, taking into consideration the security and social conditions of war. This allowed considering digital platforms not in isolation, but as elements of the information infrastructure of public sustainability. In this context, attention was paid to international broadcasting as a component of information support, in particular, data from Deutsche Welle (DW) (2024), which were used to substantiate the transnational measurement of media influence.

The structural and functional approach was used to analyse the social and communication function of convergent journalism. Within the framework of this approach, multimedia formats were considered as functional elements of the system that perform the tasks

of operational information, cognitive stabilisation, and maintaining trust. The criteria for comparing formats were communication function, trends and role in the media space. All materials used were analysed within the stated study period without extrapolating the data beyond it. Generalisations were carried out exclusively based on indicators and formulations recorded in the reports, which ensured a correspondence between the research methodology and its analytical part.

## Results

### Theoretical and conceptual foundations of convergent journalism in crisis conditions

In media studies of the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, convergent journalism is considered as an integrated model of journalistic activity, combining the production, editing and distribution of content within a single digital ecosystem focused on cross-platform information consumption (Su & Su, 2025). In contrast to the early interpretations of the early 2000s, where convergence was interpreted mainly as a technological combination of media platforms (Dwyer, 2010), latest approaches focus on the organisational restructuring of the newsroom, changing the professional roles of journalists, and transforming communication with the audience. In this context, there is a need for a clear theoretical distinction between convergent journalism and multimedia and cross-media models, which are often equated in scientific and journalistic texts. Research emphasised that multimedia concerns forms of content presentation, cross-media – channels of its distribution, while convergence covers the structural integration of technologies, editorial processes and professional roles (Hermida, 2020).

Evolution of approaches to the interpretation of convergent journalism during the 2016-2026 demonstrated a gradual departure from technological determinism. While research prior to 2016 focused on multimedia and digital tools, studies after 2016 increasingly concentrated on the professional and organisational consequences of convergence. In particular, M. Deuze & T. Witschge (2020) considered convergence as a process of transformation of journalistic identity, within which a journalist ceases to be a narrow specialist and acquires the features of a “universal media professional” able to work with various formats and platforms. The development of this logic can be traced in the paper by N. Usher (2018), where convergent journalism was analysed through the prism of procedural integration. The researcher proved that the sign of convergence is not the very fact of a multi-platform presence, but the restructuring of the newsroom in such a way that the production and distribution of content takes place in a single editorial cycle. This has direct practical consequences: shorter publication times, fewer editorial bottlenecks, and faster response times in crisis situations. The normative approach presented in the paper by K. Wahl-Jorgensen & T. Hanitzsch (2019) recorded

a fundamentally new stage in the development of the concept. Convergent journalism is interpreted here as a mandatory standard of professional activity, and not as a development option. In times of war, such normativity becomes important, since media that are not capable of convergent integration are less adaptive to infrastructure disruptions, cyber attacks, and rapid changes in the information environment. Organisational approach, developed by L. Küng (2015), summarised

previous theoretical developments and demonstrated that the result of convergence is the emergence of hybrid newsrooms, in which journalists, data analysts, SMM specialists and editors work within the framework of a common production logic. According to the researchers, such structures demonstrate higher resilience in crisis conditions and better maintain the audience's trust. Approaches to the interpretation of convergent journalism are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Basic approaches to the interpretation of convergent journalism in scientific research

Theoretical focus	Interpretation	Analytical value
Organisational structure	Hybrid newsroom	Shows management implications
Procedural	Integration of production and distribution	Substantiates editorial restructuring
Normative	Convergence as a standard	Records institutionalisation
Editorial board	Unified strategy for creating meaning	Explains content logic
Professional	Transformation of journalistic identity	Explains the change in the role of a journalist

**Source:** compared by the authors based on L. Küng (2015), N. Usher (2018), K. Wahl-Jorgensen & T. Hanitzsch (2019), A. Hermida (2020), M. Deuze & T. Witschge (2020)

The extended analysis shows that approaches to the interpretation of convergent journalism reflect a consistent theoretical evolution, in which the technological aspect gives way to professional, editorial, and organisational dimensions. There is a normative shift in which convergence ceases to be an innovation and becomes an indicator of the institutional capacity of the media, which in war conditions is directly related to the ability to provide continuous, reliable, and socially significant communication. This theoretical shift directly correlates with empirically fixed practices of functioning of online media in crisis conditions and creates the basis for further analysis of technological, organisational, and content convergence as interrelated mechanisms for ensuring information sustainability.

A full-scale war radically changes the role of journalism, transforming it from a tool for regular information to an element of the infrastructure of public sustainability. Under these conditions, convergent journalism performs a system-forming social and communication function that combines operational information, reducing information uncertainty, countering disinformation, and supporting collective mobilisation. This refers not only to multiplatformism as a technical characteristic, but also about the ability of media to ensure the continuity of communication in the face of threats to the physical, digital, and cognitive security of society. Analytical data from the Reuters Institute Digital News Report for 2023-2024 showed that in countries involved in military or acute security conflicts, there is a sharp increase in audience dependence on media capable of integrating multiple channels of information distribution simultaneously (European Federation of Journalists, 2024). The growth of multichannel consumption directly correlates with the information reserve function. Convergent media that work simultaneously in the web environment, social networks, and instant messengers have a higher

ability to compensate for communication interruptions, blocking individual platforms, or cyber attacks.

The structural element of the social and communication function is countering disinformation. Convergent journalism allows synchronising fact-checking materials, explanatory texts, video messages and short messages in different environments, reducing the "life cycle" of fake messages in the public space (Srisaracam, 2022). Of particular importance is the influence of convergent practices on the level of trust and readiness of the audience for public mobilisation. In times of war, trust in the media is formed primarily through the transparency of sources, contextualisation of events, and availability of explanatory content. Media that systematically use integrated formats (analytical text combined with video, infographics, and live updates) show a 20-25% higher level of trust on the part of the audience compared to those that are limited to monotonous presentation of information (Edelman, 2024). Thus, in military conditions, convergent journalism performs not an auxiliary, but a strategic social and communication function, acting simultaneously as a channel of information, a tool for cognitive protection and a factor in maintaining social sustainability.

Strengthening the social and communication role of convergent journalism is naturally accompanied by a transformation of professional standards and ethical norms. War creates a situation in which the classic balance between speed and accuracy of information becomes critical, since a delay in the spread of news can have security consequences, and a mistake can cause real harm. Journalists in crisis situations are forced to work in the publish-then-verify mode, which formally contradicts traditional standards, but is compensated by transparency, prompt updates, and public correction of errors (Hermida, 2018). In a digital convergent environment, it is the openness of the information verification process that becomes a factor in preserving professional

legitimacy. In parallel, the role of institutional verification mechanisms is increasing. Editors integrated into convergent newsrooms use multi-step verification procedures, including OSINT tools (Open-Source Intelligence), geolocation analysis, and visual content metadata verification (Anter, 2024). This suggests that convergence does not lower standards, but rather encourages their technological evolution.

The ethical dimension of transformation is sharpened in terms of minimising harm. In times of war, journalistic ethics are shifting from abstract neutrality to contextual responsibility. This applies to limiting the publication of data on the movement of troops, the consequences of strikes and the identification of individuals, which may create additional risks for the civilian population or defence structures. Thus, the transformation of professional standards and journalistic ethics in war conditions is not their devaluation. On the contrary, it reflects the adaptation of regulatory principles to the realities of increased information risks, where responsibility, technological verification and transparency become conditions for maintaining the trust and public significance of journalism.

### **Practical manifestations of convergent journalism in the context of the war in Ukraine**

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in 2022 was a catalyst for accelerated platform integration of Ukrainian online media, transforming their activities into a holistic communication ecosystem. Within this ecosystem, websites, social networks, instant messengers, and video platforms perform complementary functions aimed at ensuring continuous, scalable, and sustainable audience awareness in the face of military risks. This not only involves simply duplicating content, but about the functional distribution of roles between platforms depending on the speed, format, and level of reliability of information. This means that Ukrainians receive information about war, security, and social services simultaneously from several sources and devices adapted to the context of the action: the operational nature of instant messengers, the explanatory capabilities of video and text platforms, and analytical cross-sections on websites.

Telegram (n.d.), which is the leading channel for daily information, became dominant in Ukraine's media space after the start of the full-scale invasion in 2022. For example, 51% of Ukrainians consider Telegram their main source of news, ahead of YouTube (n.d.) (25%) and other social networks or instant messengers as sources of information about current events and security. Among those who subscribe to public news channels, 62% listed Telegram as a platform where they regularly receive news, while YouTube and Facebook (Meta Platforms, Inc., n.d.) were mentioned less frequently (32% and 22%, respectively) (Mazurenko, 2025). This data is consistent with the monitoring of media consumption,

according to which 65% of Ukrainians in 2025 consume news through instant messengers and social networks, despite the fact that the phone is used as a device for accessing news in 91% of cases. In the same sample, Telegram was the main channel among messengers: 94% of messenger users used it to access news, which confirms not only the frequency, but also the dominance of this channel in the information ecosystem (Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine, 2025). These data point to a shift in information consumption structures: traditional websites, while still a source of systematic information and analytics, play a secondary role in direct access to operational messages that are delivered through more dynamic formats – Telegram channels, Facebook feeds, and YouTube platforms, and quick reminders in instant messengers. This does not mean that websites lose their value completely: they continue to serve as an archive of information enhanced by fact-checking and long-term analytics, but their place in the first row of the information space is shifting in favour of platforms with low time delays in content delivery.

In practical terms, convergent journalism in Ukraine is implemented through a stabilised set of editorial practices that became widespread after 2022. One of them is platform-first distribution, where the initial publication takes place in fast digital environments (Telegram, YouTube Shorts, Facebook), and the website performs the function of an archive, verification, and analytical extension. According to IMI (2024), 40% of the news of Ukrainian online media contained links to publications in social networks or instant messengers, of which 57% of the materials were links to Telegram posts. The second practice is functional differentiation of platforms, in which the same information drive is adapted to different channels depending on temporality and cognitive load. It is worth emphasising that this model of multichannel information has unique security implications for Ukraine in the face of aggression. Despite the fact that Telegram, like other messengers, has restrictions on content control and risks of spreading false information, their decentralised nature ensures continuous access to news even during large-scale cyber attacks, blocking or communication restrictions, which are not always guaranteed by traditional websites or centralised information platforms. This becomes critical during sudden attacks, evacuation alerts, or other emergencies where the speed of information dissemination can affect the safety of citizens. In such circumstances, multimedia content – in particular, short videos, live updates in Telegram channels of state and independent media, video streams from the scene and explanatory videos on YouTube – allows combining pace, context, and emotional presence, which increases the effectiveness of communication. For example, YouTube channels of government agencies and independent journalists become not only a source of information, but also a way to explain complex events, attract the audience to the

situational understanding and context that takes place for the strategy of information sustainability of society.

Platform integration of information channels in Ukraine directly affects the organisational models of online media editorial offices. Under the influence of the long war, these models have undergone changes: from hierarchical structures to more flexible, networked and cross-functional formats of work that can quickly respond to information challenges of war. The problems faced by editorial offices (media closure, loss of staff, the need to adapt messages to different platforms) were recorded by independent monitoring. The monitoring data of the Institute of Mass Information do not contain direct digital indicators of the percentage of media that reduce highly specialised positions, but record personnel and structural challenges, in particular, the closure of a large number of media outlets due to the war. As of May 2023, more than 230 media outlets had ceased operations in Ukraine due to a full-scale invasion, which affected the professional composition of media teams and required a review of roles and functions in those editorial offices that remained active (Newsroom, 2023). IMI's main monitoring reports for 2023-2025 show that transparency of work and compliance with journalism standards in leading Ukrainian online media are gradually increasing. Thus, in 2023, the transparency of Ukrainian online media was approximately 68% (Mashkova, 2024), and in 2024 – already 78% in the top 50 publications (Ukrainian Sociological Portal, 2024), which indicates a systematic adaptation of editorial offices to the requirements of openness and responsibility to the audience. IMI also determines that many editorial decisions, in particular regarding the selection of sources and compliance with standards of balance of opinions, are consistently followed even in difficult conditions of war, which is an indicator of organisational discipline in editorial offices and the ability to maintain professional standards under the pressure of information risks (Barkar, 2025).

Regarding the optimisation of production processes in the media, available external research gives a general idea of the media landscape in Ukraine during the war. For example, USAID/Internews (United States Agency for International Development) analytical reports

2023-2024 show that social networks and instant messengers are becoming dominant sources of news for the majority of the population of Ukraine, which requires editors to quickly adapt content to these platforms, integrate data on audience behaviour and reduce the time cycles of message production. Thus, in 2024, 87% of Ukrainians used a smartphone to consume news and 84% – social networks, while only 30% noted traditional websites (Pushkariova, 2024). These trends have influenced the editorial organisation: content is increasingly being developed as a multimedia module, not just as a text publication, which involves coordinating roles between journalists, designers, videographers, and data analysts. Although IMI does not publish specific percentages of staff changes due to such transformations, the very data on editorial closures and increased transparency indicate structural changes in the organisational culture and editorial boards.

The issue of psychoemotional load of journalists is also recorded in separate reviews: international organisations pay attention to the increased level of professional stress among media professionals in areas of prolonged conflict, in particular in Ukraine. Journalists use internal security and psychological support protocols, and editorial offices rotate tasks and measures to prevent burnout, which becomes an integral part of editorial strategies for increased uncertainty (Sydorenko *et al.*, 2025). Thus, organisational transformations of Ukrainian online media in the context of war are formed as a combination of adaptation to changes in news consumption, integration of multimedia and platform channels and efforts to preserve professional standards. These changes allow editors to maintain functional effectiveness, audience trust, and the ability to respond to the challenges of long-term information stress.

Various multimedia formats – videos, streams, infographics, and interactive materials – perform specific communication functions in the Ukrainian information environment, which was formed in the context of the military conflict. They not only complement text reports, but also in many cases become the main channels for rapid transmission of information, explaining the context of events and forming public opinion (Sosnytskyi, 2025). Multimedia content formats are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Multimedia content formats and their communication role in the military media space of Ukraine**

<b>Format</b>	<b>Main communication function</b>	<b>Confirmed trends / role</b>
Telegram	Prompt information	51-52% of Ukrainians read news through Telegram channels
YouTube	Discussion and explanation of content	32-66% of respondents use YouTube as a source of news or video information
Social networks (in general)	Large-scale dissemination of information	~78% consume news via social networks and instant messengers
Conventional media (websites, television)	Secondary to digital	Only ~10% regularly consume news via television

**Source:** compared by the authors based on O. Snopok (2023), Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine (2025), Deutsche Welle (2024), A. Mazurenko (2025)

Interpretation of the Table 2 data showed that multimedia content formats in the military media space of Ukraine performed not competing, but functionally differentiated communication roles, which reflected the structural transformation of the information ecosystem in war conditions. Telegram was formed as a key channel of operational information, focused on the rapid dissemination of factual messages and reports, which met the audience's request for immediate access to up-to-date information and contributed to the concentration of various multimedia formats within a single communication environment. YouTube performed primarily an explanatory and analytical function, providing context expansion, interpretation of events, and the establishment of causal relationships through a combination of visual narrative and expert commentary. Social networks and instant messengers generally acted as a mechanism for large-scale distribution and secondary circulation of information, strengthening the network nature of communication through the practice of reposting, commenting and collective understanding of content. Conventional media in this system acquired an auxiliary status, performing rather a confirmation or background function, which indicated the shift of the centre of information interaction from hierarchical channels to a multi-platform model with a clear distribution of communication roles.

Data on total media consumption confirm that digital formats have radically replaced conventional media. Monitoring of the social impact of media in Ukraine shows that 74-96% of the audience uses social networks and instant messengers at least periodically to access information services. Social media was used by at least 74% of respondents in the fourth week before the survey, while video streaming services (YouTube) were used by 57% (Society for Social Research and Statistical Analyses Ltd., 2023). Multimedia formats in Ukraine during the war are not isolated tools, but parts of a single integrated communication strategy, where each format performs a specific function: Telegram as the main channel provides coverage and speed of access. YouTube videos and streams provide explanations and emotional insight into events. Social networks generally serve as a large-scale distribution channel. This combination illustrates that it is the convergent use of multimedia formats within the integrated communication ecosystem that increases the efficiency, perception, of reliability and engagement of the audience, which is necessary for the functioning of a democratic information space in war conditions.

## Discussion

The comparative analysis showed that the results of the study not only correlated with current international scientific approaches, but also supplemented them through a comprehensive combination of professional, organisational, and socio-communication levels of analysis. This made it possible to interpret convergent journalism not as a set of separate digital practices, but as a systematic

infrastructure for the functioning of Ukrainian online media in the face of an existential threat. Generalisations proposed by B. Medeiros Neto *et al.* (2022) showed that digital convergence in newsrooms developed primarily as a technologically and organisationally driven process related to editorial virtualisation, multiplatform content distribution, and the integration of social networks into production cycles. The conducted research confirmed the relevance of these provisions for the Ukrainian media environment, but demonstrated the expansion of their content in the context of a full-scale war. If the researchers considered convergence as an innovative stage in the development of digital journalism, the results of the study showed its transformation into a mandatory condition for the functioning and survival of the media. The Ukrainian context showed that virtual editorial offices, collaborative platforms, and social networks performed not only the function of increasing speed and interactivity, but also served as tools for ensuring the continuity of information in the face of physical threats, loss of infrastructure, and personnel restrictions.

Conceptual provisions formulated by O. Boichak & A. Hoskins (2022) within the framework of the "Digital War" paradigm were confirmed in the analysis of Ukrainian online media. The idea of moving from a hierarchical, "top-down" media environment to a fragmented but influential digital environment in which the boundaries between journalists, citizens and participants in the conflict are blurred was empirically correlated with the functioning of Telegram channels, streaming platforms, and social networks in Ukraine. The conducted research allowed concretising this thesis, showing that the personalisation of the war and the involvement of the audience did not lead to the complete disinstitutionalisation of journalism. On the contrary, in military conditions, the role of professional editorial offices as centres of verification, contextualisation, and ethical filtering of content was strengthened, even with the active participation of citizens in the dissemination of information. In contrast to the emphasis of researchers on decentralised forms of participation, the results of this study demonstrated the development of a hybrid model in which civic practices were integrated into editorial convergent strategies, rather than supplanted them.

Methodological generalisations of M. Jungblut (2022) on the role of content analysis in the study of military conflicts correlated with analytical approaches used in the study of convergent journalism in Ukraine. While agreeing with the thesis about the fundamental importance of media content analysis for understanding the frames, roles and narratives of war, the study also showed the limitations of purely content-oriented approaches in explaining the transformations of media systems. The Ukrainian case showed that for an adequate analysis of military journalism, it is necessary to go beyond textual and visual representations and consider the organisational, platform and technological parameters of news production. In this sense, the results of the

study complemented the author's approach, demonstrating that functional differentiation of platforms, editorial strategies for reserving distribution channels, and changes in the professional roles of journalists directly affected the nature of content and its public perception.

Comparison of the results of the conducted study with the results obtained by G. Ptaszek *et al.* (2023), certified conceptual and empirical consistency in the interpretation of the role of convergent platforms in military communication. In their study, researchers analysed Telegram as a space for the development of strategic narratives, where differences between authoritarian and competitive media models manifested themselves through the specifics of event framing. The study confirmed this conclusion, but expanded it at the expense of the institutional dimension, showing that the use of Telegram by Ukrainian online media was not only a tool for narrative flexibility, but also an element of system platform specialisation. If G. Ptaszek *et al.* focused mainly on the content of messages and semantic framework, but the results showed that the flexibility of the Ukrainian narrative was directly related to the organisational convergence of editorial offices that can quickly adapt the format, tone, and level of emotional saturation of content depending on the phases of the war.

Analytical provisions formulated by M. Ardan (2024) on the transformation of the Ukrainian media system from a politicised and fragmented model to a more centralised and consolidated one, coincided with the generalisations of the study. In particular, the thesis by M. Ardan on the audience's transition from conventional media to digital platforms and instant messengers was confirmed by the results of an analysis of platform differentiation, where Telegram and YouTube performed different but complementary functions. The study clarified the interpretation of this centralisation, showing that it did not mean monotony or reduced pluralism, but formed a hybrid model of convergent journalism, in which centralised editorial standards were combined with decentralised distribution channels. In contrast to the researcher's emphasis on the systemic level of media policy and structural shifts, the results of the study further showed that it was editorial convergence practices that became a mechanism for coordinating the speed of information, reliability, and ethical responsibility in war conditions.

An empirical case presented by N. Vlasova & A. Bakhmetieva (2024), on the transformation of the Dnipro TV YouTube channel, is conceptually correlated with the generalised conclusions of the study on the role of video platforms in the structure of convergent journalism. The findings showed that the integration of local media into the YouTube ecosystem contributed to a sharp increase in the audience, changing its socio-demographic characteristics and going beyond the national information space. The study confirmed these trends at the macro level, showing that YouTube in Ukrainian online media performed the function of deep explanation,

analytics, and contextualisation, which was in demand among internal and external audiences. In contrast to focused case analysis by N. Vlasova & A. Bakhmetieva, the results of the study showed that the success of video conversion depended not only on the platform, but also on the integration of video content into the overall editorial strategy, where YouTube functioned in close connection with Telegram and websites. This allowed expanding the interpretation of the Dnipro TV case as part of a broader structural process typical of the Ukrainian media system during the war.

Comparison of results obtained by A. Węglińska *et al.* (2024) with the conclusions of the conducted research showed conceptual consistency in the interpretation of war as a factor of radical transformation of the journalistic profession, while identifying differences in the levels of analytical focus. In the study by A. Węglińska *et al.*, emphasis was placed on the micro level of professional activity of military journalists, in particular on changing roles, intensifying multimedia skills, increasing psychological stress and security risks in a digital environment. The study confirmed these findings, but expanded them to show that individual professional transformations were derived from deeper institutional and structural shifts in the media system. Convergent journalism was considered not only as a set of new skills of a journalist, but as a systematic model for organising content production, where the universalisation of roles became a forced response of editorial offices to the personnel, financial, and security constraints of wartime. Thus, the findings were interpreted as an empirical manifestation of a broader process of institutional convergence, recorded at the level of the entire Ukrainian online media ecosystem.

Comparative analysis with the study by A. Oleinik (2025) clarified the issue of narrative uniformity and the role of platforms in military communication. The researcher argued that digital and conventional media within the same country showed a high level of discursive convergence, forming stable national information clusters, where Telegram, television, and official statements reproduced coordinated narratives. The conducted study generally confirmed this pattern for the Ukrainian case, but supplemented it with a conclusion about the functional differentiation of platforms within the general narrative field. Although the semantic framework remained consistent, the various platforms performed excellent communication functions: Telegram provided efficiency and mobilisation effect, YouTube was responsible for explanation and interpretation, and websites were responsible for maintaining analytical depth and verifiability. In contrast to approach by A. Oleinik (2025), which emphasised the reproduction of state-centred narratives in the digital space, the study showed that it was the convergent organisation of editorial offices that helped to combine narrative unity with multi-level communication adapted to the fragmented needs of the audience.

Comparison with the findings of O. Marukhovska-Kartunova *et al.* (2023) showed a common understanding of the ambivalent role of digital platforms and social networks in war. The researchers emphasised the dual effect of digital journalism: on the one hand, it provides rapid global dissemination of information and mobilises international support for Ukraine, on the other – creates a favourable environment for manipulation, fakes, and propaganda. The study was consistent with these findings, but shifted the focus from audience selectivity to editorial mechanisms for countering information threats. It was shown that in a full-scale war, it was convergent practices – a combination of OSINT verification, cross-platform verification, and content contextualisation – which reduced the destructive impact of disinformation and helped maintain trust. If O. Marukhovska-Kartunova *et al.* (2023) focused on the cognitive filters of the audience, the results of the current study showed the role of institutional media responsibility in shaping the information stability of society.

In general, the comparison with the analysed studies showed that the results of the study were consistent with international theoretical approaches to the study of digital journalism and media warfare, while expanding them at the expense of the Ukrainian context. It was shown that convergent journalism in Ukraine not only reflected global trends in digitalisation, but also formed a specific model of military communication, in which technological, organisational, and social convergence functioned as components of the infrastructure of social sustainability. This helped to clarify the scientific understanding of the role of media in protracted conflicts and outline the areas for further comparative research in the field of military and crisis journalism.

## ■ Conclusions

The conducted research identified and analysed the vectors of transformation of the Ukrainian media system in the context of a full-scale war, focusing on the phenomenon of convergent journalism as a central mechanism of adaptation. In the course of research, it was found that war acted as a catalyst that accelerated and radicalised the process of convergence, transforming it from a theoretical model or innovative practice into a mandatory norm for the functioning and survival of the media. Theoretical analysis has demonstrated the evolution of scientific understanding of convergence – from a technologically determined approach that emphasised multi-platform capabilities to a comprehensive vision that integrates organisational, procedural, professional and regulatory components. It was proved that this interpretation, where convergence acts as a standard of institutional capacity, describes the reality of Ukrainian media, which are forced

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to simultaneously rebuild editorial processes, transform professional roles of journalists, and adapt ethical principles to the conditions of an emergency.

The study of Ukrainian online media practices demonstrated the development of a holistic communication ecosystem based on the principles of functional differentiation of platforms. Within this ecosystem, Telegram has established itself as the dominant operational information channel, performing a role even in the face of interruptions and cyber attacks, while YouTube has taken on the functions of in-depth explanation and contextualisation of events, and websites have become archives and platforms for verified analytics. This platform specialisation was not accidental, but turned out to be a strategic response to the needs of an audience that needed speed, reliability, and simultaneously the depth of understanding. The conclusion was the understanding that in the context of an existential threat, convergent journalism has gone beyond a technical tool and acquired the status of a strategic social and communication function. It has evolved into an infrastructure of public sustainability, combining mechanisms for rapid informing, cognitive protection against disinformation, support for collective mobilisation, and maintaining trust. Furthermore, the transformation of professional standards, the shift from the principle of verify-then-publish to publish-then-verify, the strengthening of the role of OSINT verification tools, and the contextualisation of ethical principles towards minimising harm did not lead to the devaluation of journalism, but, on the contrary, formed a new adaptive regulatory framework corresponding to the realities of information warfare. The limitation of the study was that the analysis of convergent journalism practices was based mainly on available monitoring, reports and published cases, which did not allow for an in-depth comparison of internal organisational processes and long-term transformation effects in individual editorial offices. The prospects for further research are to conduct a comparative longitudinal analysis of specific media organisations to study the evolution of their convergent models, and to quantify the direct impact of these practices on the level of audience trust and public resilience in the context of ongoing conflict.

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## Конвергентна журналістика українських онлайн-медіа в умовах повномасштабної війни

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**Анотація.** Метою проведеного дослідження стало визначення особливостей функціонування конвергентної журналістики українських онлайн-медіа та її ролі у забезпеченні ефективної комунікації в умовах воєнного конфлікту. Методологія дослідження поєднувала порівняльний, контекстуальний та структурно-функціональний аналіз відкритих джерел, галузевих моніторингів і результатів соціологічних опитувань. Результати показали, що війна прискорила процес конвергенції, трансформувавши його з інноваційної практики в норму функціонування медіа, при цьому змінився характер професійних ролей журналістів, що поєднували функції репортера, аналітика та мультимедійного продюсера. Було встановлено, що Telegram став доміантним каналом оперативного інформування, YouTube виконує функції контекстуалізації та пояснення подій, а вебсайти забезпечують архівування та верифікацію аналітичного контенту. Аналіз показав, що мультимедійні формати підвищили інтерактивність та залученість аудиторії, одночасно створюючи механізми когнітивного захисту від дезінформації. Досліджено, що професійні стандарти журналістики зазнали адаптації, зокрема зміщення від традиційного принципу перевірки перед публікацією до оперативного публікування з подальшою верифікацією та використання інструментів відкритих джерел для підтвердження фактів. Висновки дослідження засвідчили, що конвергентна журналістика українських онлайн-медіа має місце для забезпечення інформаційної стабільності та ефективного управління суспільною комунікацією під час війни. Було доведено, що трансформація професійних стандартів і платформна диференціація медіа створили комплексну систему взаємодії між редакціями та аудиторією. Практичне значення отриманих результатів полягає в їх орієнтації на редакційні команди, медіаекспертів і органи державної комунікації для підвищення ефективності інформаційної політики та медіабезпеки в кризових умовах

**Ключові слова:** верифікація; рівень довіри; інтеграція; дезінформація; соціальні мережі; комунікація