

SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

THE MEDIATISATION OF POLITICS AND POLITIZATION OF MEDIA IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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The media is one of the key elements that influence the political system of the Russian Federation. The first thing that needs to be emphasised is that mass communication play an important role in the Russia's media sphere. Experts are convinced that the process of mass communication will be effective only when the main media functions would have been implemented: 1. The information function; 2. Cultural function; 3. Educational function; 4. Recreational function; 5. Power control function; 6. Ideological function.

Russian experts believe that the most important function is ideological function, where ideology «is a view on reality from the perspective of a particular social group» [4, p. 18]. I. Dzialoshinsky emphasize that contemporary Russian media can choose between three models:

1. Autocratic technocracy model – the aim of this model is to teach recipient the «right» viewpoint. It is important for the media to turn the recipient into a «disciple» who will unhesitatingly trust received information.

2. Communicative-cognitive model – the purpose of this model is to provide large amount of relevant information, due to which the recipient will have his own opinion and vision of the presented problems in the media [3, p. 37].

3. Humanitarian model – the aim of the model is to present humanitarian values to society. The concept of humanistic journalism also appears in the model [4, p. 21].

The public in general tend to believe that the Soviet past in contemporary Russia greatly influence on the nature of the relationship between politicians and the media. In the Soviet Union, the media has an impact on public opinion and politics.

In Russia, an increase in the process of mediatisation of politics was first noted during presidential election in 1996. This stage was characterised by a lack of significant political events and the creation of these events in an

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artificial way. E. Voinova notes that during this period the possibility emerged of creating «political scenery and whole spectacles in public space while trying to conceal anything in real politics». The attention of politicians was concentrated not on activities but rather on the creation of an image. This is related to the fact that the media aims not to describe the actions of politicians but to create their media images [2, pp. 617–618].

In the following years, the Russian media came completely under the control of the Russian authorities. In this way, the government blocked the development of commercial television, because the channels, which were not financed by the Russian political elite, tried to pursue policies independent of the authorities. This position led to conflicts with the government and later to tight control of the media by the state. In the following years, the Russian media came completely under the control of the Russian authorities. In this way, the government blocked the development of commercial television, when the channels, which were not financially dependent on the Russian political elite, tried to pursue independent policies and adopt unsubmissive positions. This position led to conflicts with the government and later to the control of the media by the authorities.

Television retains the leadership of information sources with the highest trust: half of Russians trust it, one in five (22% and 20%, respectively) trusts Internet publications and social networks:

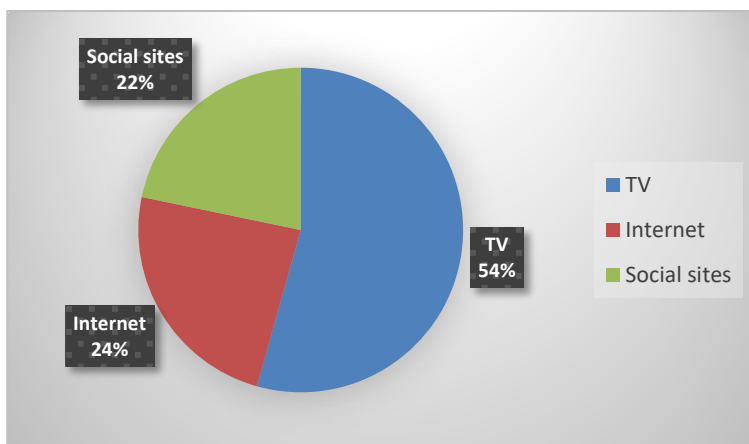


Figure 1. What media sources do you trust most to be well-informed?

Source: [1]

Besides, it is worth highlighting the fact that the most popular television channels in Russia are owned by the All-Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company or every year receives state support in the form of subsidies. On the Russian television market, weekly programs are popular, in which journalists and program guests discuss political events in Russia and the world. It is undeniable that It should be emphasised that the Russian government is using these programmes and journalists to influence Russian society. It follows that television is transmitting new information to the audience in the context of already existing stereotypes about a great Russia, imperial aims and Putin as the father of the Russian people.

From these facts, one may conclude that the media in the Russian Federation contribute to the shift of political processes into the media sphere. The media are concerned to be one of the methods of legitimizing political power in the Russian Federation. The trend of mediaocracy is a serious problem in contemporary Russian political communication.

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