ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT AS A TOOL FOR NETOCRATIC MANAGEMENT: BENEFITS AND CAPABILITIES

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Summary. The article considers the advantages and possibilities of e-governance as a tool for non-tocratic public administration. Aspects that positively influence the formation of a modern management system are identified, including transparency, efficiency, convenience and accessibility, reducing corruption, saving money, developing an electronic economy, improving the quality of services, innovation, preserving the environment, etc. Perspective directions of improvement of electronic control are designated.

Key words: e-government, public administration, non-critical administration, information and communication technologies, advantages, opportunities.

The end of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century was marked by the rapid development of information and communication technologies, which led to the emergence of the phenomenon of «electronic government» as a new form of communication between government and society. The idea of active use of information and communication technologies in order to increase the effective operation of the government arose on the basis of the ideology of the «new public management», designed to promote the implementation of administrative reforms launched in the countries of the Western world in the 90s of the twentieth century.

The term «electronic government» (E-Government) itself emerged later (1997) on the initiative of the US National Science Foundation [6]. It was understood as the reduction of bureaucracy, the avoidance of traditional paper workflow and its replacement with electronic one, the transfer of state and municipal services to the Internet. Subsequently, the concept of «electronic government» acquired additional content, the essence of which is the formation of a new system of interaction between the state and society.

So far, there is no unambiguous interpretation of the concept of «e-government», however, all characteristics can be conditionally divided into several groups: definitions that focus solely on the theoretical approach and possible changes in society due to the introduction of e-government; a definition focused on the applied nature of e-government and focused on the structural elements of the concept; characteristics describing technical aspects (creation of a network, software, etc.); definitions aimed at a comprehensive study of issues and ensuring the greatest efficiency of public administration [1 – 3]. So, the domestic
understanding of e-government as a public administration organization created on the basis of electronic means for processing, transmitting and distributing information, as an electronic means for providing services by state authorities to different categories of citizens (pensioners, workers, businessmen, civil servants, etc.) [4] is quite justified and meaningful.

In foreign scientific literature there is also no unambiguous interpretation of the concept of «electronic government» – all the variety of definitions comes down to two approaches. Within the framework of the first, «narrow», e-government is considered as the activity of public authorities using information and communication technologies (providing services to the population and business, organizing public procurement, conducting financial transactions, obtaining and providing information, etc.) [5, p. 6]; the second, «broad» approach involves understanding e-government as a process of transforming internal and external interaction in the public administration system through the use of information and communication technologies in order to optimize management, improve the quality of public service and ensure the constitutional rights of citizens [6].

The above approaches to the definition of the concept of «electronic government» indicate the integration of governance into the virtual information space, which creates favorable prerequisites for the formation of effective e-democracy as a logical continuation of the transformation of socio-political processes in the information society, which corresponds to the non-tocratic vector of development of public administration. Elements of electronic control, which are successfully tested, are gradually being introduced into wide use. Therefore, we can talk about the gradual formation of netocratic management, which is acquiring more and more mechanisms, tools, methods and forms of communication between the government and society.

By netocratic public administration we mean a governance model based on transparency, openness, cooperation and public involvement in the decision-making process through information and communication technologies. This approach allows for a more democratic and open nature of managerial decision-making, which is a mandatory attribute of the information society [7, p. 99].

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) characterizes e-government using information and communication technologies, in particular the Internet, as a tool for achieving better government. At the same time, the issue of governance is defined as dominant, and to a lesser extent as a technology issue: «E-government is more about government than about «e» (electronic government is more about government than about technology) – this is the postulate of the OECD activity in e-governance [8].

This means that governments must use the mechanisms and opportunities of the information society in order to ensure that the work of public administration bodies meets the needs of citizens as much as possible. The electronic management platform today is an important tool for improving the efficiency and transparency of management processes, ensuring a higher quality of public services, protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens, and reducing state budget expenditures. An effective e-democracy implies the ability of every citizen to participate in the formation and implementation of state policy, decision-making by authorities, while using
information technology for two-way interactive communication between the state and society, which indicates the democratization of public administration and the netocratic vector of its development.

Therefore, taking into account the above, we can identify the positive aspects of the application of e-government, which has prospects and opportunities for improving the public administration system. In particular, among them:

- transparency: e-governance ensures transparency and openness in the activities of government agencies; contributes to increasing the transparency of power, as it allows citizens to gain access to open information about the position and decisions of public bodies and to become involved in the processes of government;
- efficiency: e-government increases the efficiency of public authorities – thanks to automated systems, the speed and accuracy of information processing is increased, the number of errors associated with the human factor is reduced, and better service delivery is ensured;
- convenience and accessibility: e-governance makes it possible for citizens to have convenient and quick access to public services and information, regardless of their residence and location, which reduces bureaucratic barriers and improves the availability of public services;
- reduction of corruption: e-governance contributes to the reduction of corruption in government by minimizing contacts between citizens and government bodies and by ensuring transparency and openness of management processes;
- cost savings: e-government allows to reduce the state's expenses for the bureaucracy, because many management processes can be automated and carried out with the help of information and communication technologies; for example, some services can be provided automatically without citizen participation, which can significantly reduce the time and cost for government agencies;
- development of the e-economy: e-governance contributes to the development of the e-economy and the increase of the competitiveness of the state in the world market;
- improving the quality of services: thanks to e-government, it is possible to improve the quality of public services by optimizing the procedures for communication with citizens;
- innovations: e-governance predetermines the development of new technologies and innovations, in particular, in the areas of electronic identification, electronic signature, blockchains, etc.;
- save the environment: thanks to e-governance, the cost of paper, printing equipment and other materials is reduced, which positively affects the environment and conserves natural resources.

As you can see, the benefits of e-government are obvious and can be quite significant. Today, e-government has significant potential to improve the efficiency and transparency of the management system. These advantages can become an effective tool for the formation of netocratic public administration with the successful implementation of e-projects, providing the necessary infrastructure and competent personnel. Unfortunately, due to insufficient technical, economic or human resources, not all states are ready to implement e-government, which requires a comprehensive systemic reform to realize its potential, which will include the
development and implementation of new technologies and software, changing the culture of government work, increasing the competencies of civil servants, improving infrastructure and Internet access for citizens; which will provide political, economic, legal, educational, cultural, technical, organizational requirements for the implementation of e-governance.

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