E-GOVERNMENT: WAY OF MODERNIZATION AND EFFICIENCY ENHANCEMENT OF PUBLIC GOVERNANCE

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Introduction. The article focuses on the problem of modernizing public governance through integration of e-government into the public governance system of the Russian Federation. Conceptual and legal basis of e-government, key areas for modernizing and improving the public governance through information technology, and the e-government infrastructure are examined. The experience of implementing e-government in the Russian Federation over the past decade shows that the principles of the Western model cannot be fully applied in the country. In addition, among the political, social and economic issues related to implementation of e-government in Russia, there are those that sometimes complicate the use of e-government in our country to the fullest. However, tremendous work has been done to integrate key e-government solutions into the system of public governance. The analytical, methodological and organizational work has already significantly improved the efficiency of public governance, through the implementation of innovative approaches. Many of the target indicators have already been achieved, a number of others in the short term will reach the levels defined in regulatory legal acts.

Theoretical Background. The main theoretical methods of the present study are the plan-fact comparative analysis of transformation of public governance based on digitalization, identification and resolution of the contradiction related to the integration of information-communication technologies in public governance system. We initiate a broad discussion of the evolution of administrative models from conventional to digital platform in the Russian Federation. We will consider the current stage of development of public administration systems, its levels, capabilities and methods through the prism of:
- technological dimensions of e-government;
- pitfalls of the digitalization of public governance;
- challenges to the public governance in the future.

In a world characterized by rapid changes which are caused by globalization, the knowledge economy creates opportunities for both the society and the state.

Results. The arguments for improvement of public governance for citizens led governments of different countries to the need to develop the information society based on the core infrastructure – the e-government. It is uneven but objective process.

Discussion. The trend of reforming and modernizing the system of public governance began to rise in many countries. The performance of the state’s activities can be measured by the quantity and quality of the goods and services provided for its citi-
The e-government proved to be efficient tool to provide information and data, as well as public goods and services, when the direct interaction between government and citizens is carried out based on multi-dimensional information and communication technologies (ICT). E-government embraces government-to-citizens (G2C), government-to-business (G2B), government-to-government (G2G) spheres and relies on both physical ICT infrastructure (computing networks and capacities) and all sorts of communication platforms (portals, crowdsourcing, social networks).

The idea of using ICT for the public interests has appeared in the early 1990s. In 1991, the United States began talking about e-government as a concept of fundamentally new stage of public governance, created for the interaction between the public authorities [1]. The beginning of new digital governance era started with creation of websites for government agencies and officials displaying full and reliable information on their activities. By that time, this concept was a presentation of information in public about the work of government agencies, and allowed paying taxes without leaving home.

In July 1995 the Commission of the European Communities decided to establish the Forum of the Information Society which meant the creation of a platform for the exchange of ideas, opinions and proposals on issues related to the information society. The core idea discussed at the Forum was the need to introduce ICT to preserve global competitiveness of Europe [2].

In 1997, the National Science Foundation of the United States introduced the notion of «digital government». Over time, in broad scientific use this concept was transformed into the concept of «electronic government» [3].

The next step towards creation of e-government was the adoption of the program «Electronic Europe» in 2000, which identified the following problems that required the priority solutions:
- creation of information and communication infrastructure and provision of equal access to it for all service providers;
- clear legislative framework for the e-government concept and all its elements;
- skilled specialists;
- global coverage of networks throughout the EU [4].

Thus, the unified key signs of e-government are beginning to spread around the world: openness, accessibility, transparency, accountability of public authorities to its citizens, convenience and ease of use.

For modern Russia at the beginning of the 21st century, non-productive mechanisms for exchanging information, as well as ineffective approaches to the elaboration, adoption and implementation of management decisions, have become one of the most important barriers to the effective functioning of the public governance system.

In 1999 the State Duma developed a concept for the creation of an information society and defined the respective objectives [5]. The first stage of the transition to the information society was the creation the official websites by the authorities. By the end of 2000, more than half of the Russian Federal Ministries and agencies had their own websites. The second stage had to be the rendering of a number of public and municipal services to citizens, such as, paying taxes or providing the responses to the requests by the applicants. Further, the next, third stage of the development focused on deploying the electronic portal of public services. It was necessary to introduce and develop new forms of interaction between the authorities and the society.

In a broad sense, Russian e-government is defined as a key element in «e-democracy», which establishes the interaction of citizens of our country with representatives of the authorities. In the long-term, the e-government is also viewed as a new model of public governance, which resulted from the transformation of tra-
ditionally established relations between the government and the society [6].

The Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation on January 28, 2002, №65 «On the federal target program «Electronic Russia (2002 - 2010)» adopted the program targeted to creation of Russian information society within 8 years period. The main goal of this federal program was the improvement of the quality of the relations between the state and the society in the daily activities of public authorities, by increasing the availability of information for citizens on the activities of departments within the system of Russian governance and the fast-track of state and municipal services provision to the citizens» [7].

The legal framework of e-government in Russia

Introduction of e-government requires respective legal framework. There are two major regulatory acts:

- The Federal Law №210 «On the organization of public and municipal services» dated July 27, 2010 (hereinafter - the Federal Law № 210), and

The main tasks requiring practical solutions are also specified in the federal target programs «Electronic Russia (2002-2010)» (accomplished) and «Information Society (2011-2020)» (current).

According to Federal Law №210, the key direction of modernizing public governance is the use of ICT in the provision of public services. Such application implies to facilitate interagency communication and, consequently, to increase the efficiency of public authorities activities [8]. Decree №601 establishes target indicators of the efficiency of the e-government, that concern four main aspects: the level of citizens’ satisfaction with services, access to services, the use of a mechanism for obtaining public services in an electronic form and waiting time in the line to get the services. The following target indicators have been established for the development of e-government: at least 90% of citizens should be satisfied with the quality of service provision by 2018 and the same number of citizens should have access to receiving public services on the basis of «one window» (one-stop-shop) principle. The waiting time for receiving a public service by 2018 should be reduced to 15 minutes.

By 2017, multifunctional centers in Moscow, for instance, already have a tendency to meet these targets. Thus, back in 2013, the waiting time averaged 55 minutes. Today the target of 15 minutes is almost reached; the maximum waiting time is 20 minutes [9].

According to Decree №601, another target indicator of the successful transfer of public services into electronic form is established, namely, the proportion of citizens using the mechanism for obtaining state and municipal services in electronic form. The level of implementation of e-government will be assessed as effective if by 2018 the percentage of satisfied citizens will reach 70 percent [10].

Currently the Government is implementing the «Information Society (2011-2020)» program in a number of areas: in addition to the development of e-government, it is overcoming so called “digital inequality” in the regions, improving communication technologies availability. The basic principle which the Program encompasses is that all work is being carried out within the framework of the Program should be customers-oriented [11].

The infrastructure of e-government as a part of public governance system

The infrastructure of e-government is a set of automated and telecommunication systems that support the processes of information interaction of all e-government entities. In accordance with the Order of the Government of the Russian Federation of August 26, 2009, № 1231 «On the appointment of Rostelecom», State-owned Public Company «Rostelecom» was appointed the sole contractor for design and creation of the e-government infrastructure in Russia. According to the new contract of 2017, the key goal of Rostelecom is the formation of a reliable digital space that will unite the authorities and society [12]. Rostelecom is responsible for deployment of the Unified Government Services Portal (UGSP), the Simplified registration, unified identification and authentication system (UIAS), the System of inter-agency electronic interaction (SIEI).

The most important link in the interaction of citizens and authorities is the UGSP as nationwide automated information system that allows citizens and organizations to receive public and municipal services in electronic form. Another important role of the portal is to provide full information about the available public services, on the activities carried out in the departments of the Government of the Russian Federation. Moreover, it provides an op-
opportunity for citizens to receive the service electronically without leaving a house. The UIAS traces the operations of citizens who register on the UGSP. In 2016, almost 18 million new users were registered on the UGSP. The monthly growth of users of the public services portal registered in the UIAS ranged from 800 thousand to 2,4 million people. At the same time, in 2015, over 22 million people were registered with the UIAS, 13 million in 2014, and 6,9 million in 2013. At the beginning of 2017, the number of registered citizens in the UIAS reached 40 million [13].

The next dimension of the e-government infrastructure is simplified registration. The registration at the UGSP is the first thing required for a citizen accessing the portal for the first time. The registration process should be understandable and convenient for the user of any level. The new user registration option is a three-step process or creating an account. Each stage corresponds to a specific list of services. In cases where a citizen needs to obtain services that require more advanced level of the account, for example, to order a new driving license, the system will require more profound confirmation of the identity. Applicants have the opportunity to apply personally through a chain of authorized service centers (offices of the Post of Russia, multifunctional centers, offices of Rostelecom).

The UIAS is a nationwide information system aimed at ensuring and protecting the rights of citizens to legalized and secured access to public services. Moreover, this system grants officials the right to have the authorized access to the necessary information while providing these services and the implementation of legally meaningful actions for the provision of these services. Convenience for citizens of the UIAS is proved by remarkable progress of the number of users registered in the system. In 2013, the system was used by 3,5 million people, while by 2016 the number reached 32 million registered citizens [14].

To provide public services, government agencies need a mechanism for exchanging data between governmental executive bodies. For this purpose, a system of inter-agency electronic interaction (SIEI) was created. This system is designed to address a number of issues, which arise when authorities exercise their powers. Before introduction of the e-government, the exchange of information between agencies took a long time. The e-government made it possible to interact in electronic form providing public services on-line. Today SIEI is integrated in all government bodies at all levels.

Important to note that the fundamental principle of interaction of citizens and public authorities is defined as «one window principle» and it is embodied into the concept of e-government. Thanks to the SIEI, which replaced paper letters and telephone conversations, the necessity of the user's presence in the process of preparing the state service for provision has become history.

Special service centers that are widely presented in Russia - multifunctional centers (MFCs) are materialization and practical implementation of the «one window principle». A citizen submits an application in the operator's «window» at the nearest multifunctional center, and after a fixed period of time receives the result (or desired service) in the same «window» of the MFC. Therefore, all work for coordination of information flow and exchange between governmental bodies involved in the provision of a service is performed by MFC staff.

Directions and goals of modernization of public governance in digital era

To have an ability to analyze the progress, to assess the achieved results, to set new goals and objectives for further implementation of the e-government concept, and also apply timely correcting actions, it is necessary to «measure» the phases of progress of certain established targets. Therefore, a comprehensive system of indicators for assessing the degree of development of ICT is implemented and done every two years by the United Nations. The UN publishes annual reports – UN Global E-Government Readiness Reports, describing potentials and opportunities for developing the level of readiness of 193 countries to use e-government. The countries are assessed on the basis of the E-Government Readiness Index, that is, the country's readiness index for the implementation of the e-government concept [15].

The E-Government Readiness Index reflects mainly the level of technological infrastructure development in order to comprehend how the country uses ICT capabilities for national, economic, social and cultural development. Based on this index, the E-Government Development Rating is compiled. In this rating for 2016, Russia ranked 35th out of 193 possible [16].

In addition to international ratings, the e-government in Russia is assessed on the basis of feedback from the public. «Your control» - a controlling portal - which reflects the opinion of the citizens about the services provided, the work of specific officials and authorities. Today the portal «Your control» carries over
94 million feedback reviews on public officials. Its statistics shows that 95 percent of citizens are satisfied with the quality of public services. 17 million services were evaluated, and the number of detailed reviews reached 308,6 thousand [17].

Another way to evaluate public service performance is to embrace SMS-responses. After visiting a public department a citizen receives SMS with a request to evaluate the work of respective official. The received evaluation forms solid base for key performance indicators (KPI) appraisal of officials who directly provide the service and are responsible for the quality of its provision.

Currently almost all Russian regions have established connection with public service centers and unified quality monitoring system. As of September 18, 2016, 6,390 out of 7,190 branches of MFCs across the country. Evaluations are processed in two information systems - in the system of MFCs and in a special national monitoring system. The monitoring is carried out by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation. Russian regions are assessed according to eight indicators, including the percentage of citizens who have access to receiving public and municipal services, the number of mandatory services rendered at the MFCs. Thus, according to data for 2016, the leading regions are Voronezh, Moscow and Lipetsk. The Republic of Crimea, Sevastopol, North Ossetia, Tatarstan and Tver region closed the rating [18].

Results of the Study: Plans and prospects for the development of e-government

The implementation of e-government leads to reduction in the number of duplicated government functions, improving the quality of government services, reducing the time for servicing applicants, reducing administrative barriers, expanding the range of public services, improving the efficiency of government agencies, assuring customer satisfaction and upgrading public governance in general.

However, there are the issues that need to be addressed. More than half of the subjects of the Russian Federation has not yet reached the planned target indicators. Some of the regional government service portals put in operation at the end of 2016 slowed down the development of the system of provision of public services. It is also necessary to solve tasks related to the convenience and functionality of the UGSP. Little attention is still paid to the development of ICT competencies of civil servants. Only 5.7 percent of officials, according to the Federal State Statistics Service in 2016, received training in the «information and analytical» area, which includes the acquisition of skills and abilities in the field of ICT [19].

Discussion. Current achievements of the Russian e-government

The Ministry of Communications and Mass Communications concludes that in recent years there has been a very rapid growth and good progress of the remote provision of public services. Through the United Government Services Portal in 2015, almost 50 million federal and nearly 1 million regional services were rendered. For 2016 these figures reached already 220 million in total. For comparison, in 2014 the number of services rendered was only 16.3 million. As of the end of 2016, all basic federal and municipal resources and 12 thousand organizations that participate in the provision of federal and municipal services were connected to the SIEI. The number of transactions carried out through SIEI is growing rapidly: 1.8 billion in 2013, 4.3 billion in 2014, 7 billion in 2015 and in 2016, the number has reached 7.2 billion [20].

As of the beginning of 2017, we register upward trends in the implementation of e-government in our country especially regarding achievement of target indicators. According to the Decree №601, the target for the proportion of citizens using electronic public services in 2018 should be 70%. The planned intermediate result of 50% in 2016 was exceeded and amounted to 51.3% [21]. The results of 2016 show that 32 subjects of the Russian Federation out of 85 exceeded the target mark of 50%. Note that the leaders in the use of electronic public services among the federal districts were Central (56.3%), Privolzhsky (55.3%) and Urals (53.1%), 53 subjects of the Russian Federation did not reached the set goal. The Southern district (48.4%) and the Far Eastern district (48%) closely approached the target figure.

According to the monitoring data of the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia, the level of citizens’ satisfaction with the quality of service provision is constantly growing and reaching 81.2% in 2015-2016, with target 90% by 2018 [22].

A significant innovation implemented to improve the transparency of the public governance was presented in the agenda of the meeting of the Government Commission on the use of information technologies to improve the quality of life and the conditions for business. The creation of the system «The elec-
Electronic budget, planned for implementation in 2017 was announced by the Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation Maxim Oreshkin. It reflects the data of all participants working with budgetary resources. This mechanism provides access to the respective portal and gives an opportunity to study the procedure of budget formation, to track the amount of financing of extra-budgetary funds. Any citizen is able to assess the efficiency and track record of spending.

Conclusion

Nonetheless, we can conclude that today in Russia there is a dynamic development of the information society and serious steps have been taken to shape and integrate e-government into modern public governance system. Undoubtedly, with constant funding and proper control, it will increase its efficiency rapidly and costs will be fully justified, as happened in the leading countries of the West [23]. To date, we have seen a gradual and rapid movement towards development, modernization and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the public governance system. And it is important to underline that the key role in this process is played by the implementation of e-government in the Russian Federation.

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Введение. Статья посвящена проблеме модернизации государственного управления посредством формирования и интеграции электронного правительства в систему государственного управления Российской Федерации. Рассматриваются концептуальные и правовые основы электронного правительства, ключевые области для модернизации и повышения эффективности государственного управления с использованием механизмов информационных технологий и инфраструктуры электронного правительства в рамках системы государственного управления.

Электронное правительство как фактор модернизации и повышения эффективности государственного управления

В целях усовершенствования государственного управления и обеспечения всестороннего обеспечения качества предоставления государственных услуг в Российской Федерации, в том числе посредством электронных средств, была разработана Концепция электронного правительства Российской Федерации. Ее основой является установление принципов государственного управления, предусматривающих использование информационных технологий и электронных средств в деятельности органов государственной власти и органов местного самоуправления.

- технологических аспектов электронного правительства;
- ловушек цифровизации государственного управления;
- проблем государственного управления в будущем.

Результаты. Аргументы в пользу улучшения государственного управления для граждан убеждают правительства разных стран в необходимости развития информационного общества на основе инфраструктуры - электронного правительства.

Дискуссия. В последнее время во многих странах началась тенденция реформирования и модернизации системы государственного управления. Эффективность деятельности государства может все больше определяться количеством и качеством товаров и услуг, предоставляемых его гражданам. Многие страны мира стремятся возродить новую систему государственного управления на основе принципов проактивности, прозрачности, подотчетности и эффективности. Для достижения этих целей правительства постепенно внедряют инновации в свои организационные структуры, стратегии и планы своей деятельности и методы использования человеческих, информационных, технологических и финансовых ресурсов.

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