Digitalization processes in public administration: foreign experience

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Abstract: The article discusses the foreign experience of implementing information technology in public administration and the processes of providing public services.

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One of the main features of the development of the modern world community as a whole and some national states is the active and accelerated development of the information space. New information realities have a tangible impact on the nature and characteristics of interpersonal, social, domestic and interstate relations.

The implementation of information technology in the processes of public services' provision is becoming not only a tool of state modernization, but also a tool for innovation. This leads to the fact that society begins to assess the level of efficiency of public administration and the attitude of the state to citizens in general, on the basis of which the idea of the implementation of state internal policy is formed.

The main directions of the state information policy are: the development of the Internet as a socio-political resource; the creation of e-government through the transfer of most public services in the electronic version; the creation of a single information space; state regulation of the media, including electronic; regulatory and legislative regulation of information relations and processes.

Public administration is implemented through e-government channels, which makes it possible to strategically manage its initiatives, uses government websites as the main tool and it is based on information policy procedures [1, p. 185].

The formation and development of e-government in Canada was quite rapid, the processes of interactive and transactional stages of e-government development proceeded in parallel. At the present stage in the framework of the modern information policy of the government it continues to generate "holistic government". The purpose of this policy is to create a vertical integrated virtual system of public network management.

The stage of "network presence" is characterized, on the one hand, by the high responsibility of Canadian government structures for the provision of services and information in the Internet environment, and, on the other hand, by the high level of electronic participation of citizens. The average Internet user of e-government in Canada belongs to the

category of politically active population, which provides support for the adaptation of political decisions of the Canadian government.

The e-government of Canada makes extensive use of tools to ensure a high percentage of e-participation, including 100% working feedback mechanisms, the presence of discourse, and the creation of "community", conducting surveys and raising issues to engage citizens in dialogue with government structures.

The established feedback creates prerequisites for civil control over the activities of state power structures and simplifies the procedures for obtaining necessary and relevant information by citizens. Internet technologies of e-government of Canada allow maintaining round-the-clock communication with representatives of the target political audience, providing two-way communication between a politician and a potential voter, a political force and its supporters. E-government of Canada makes possible the emergence of new effective mechanisms of public, including political mobilization of citizens [2, p. 81].

In Canada, at the heart of any government initiative there is the idea that the state cannot reform any public or state structure without relying on other forces-business structures, public institutions, etc. today there is one government portal that provides interaction between the government and citizens. This is the official website of Canada and the government, through which you can access the websites of all departments, ministries, departments and other government departments.

The main goal of the project "Open government" in Canada is to involve citizens and interested organizations in making management decisions, ensuring their participation in the open examination of socially significant projects of legal acts, as well as to ensuring transparency of the activities of public authorities [3].

The "Open government" is based on the principle of "crowdsourcing", which allows using the opinions of citizens to improve legal acts. Crowdsourcing is currently actively developing as a model for solving any kind of problems and challenges facing both business and the state and society as a whole. The advantage of this method is the transition from the practice of simple commenting to the active involvement of citizens in the development of draft regulations in the form of direct work on the text of a legal act.

The mechanisms of "Open government" allow citizens: to know everything about public administration, to participate in public decision-making, to control the power.

The Canadian virtual state is tied to the norms and practices of the Canadian system of government, and information and communication technologies provide a new communication environment that enhances the capabilities of traditional political structures. The virtual state includes various aspects of e-government, e-governance and e-policymaking. E-government is an institutional dimension of the virtual state; it works as an electronic platform of government, whose functions are mediated by the technological environment. Canada's e-government is one of the most successful in the world. According to the data of Agency "Accenture" Canada is ranked first in the field of e-government from 2001 to 2005. According to UN studies conducted in 2005-2012, Canada has long been among the ten

countries with the most developed e-government1: 2005-8th place (index 0.8425), 2008-7th place (index 0.8172), 2010-3rd place (index 0.8448), 2012-11th place (index 0.8430) [4].

E-government in Canada uses IT technologies and digital devices, websites and email to initiate contact between citizens and the government. But in the process of work with citizens traditional methods are still used, such as personal consultations when citizens visit government departments, consultations of citizens by phone.

Well-organized feedback allows public authorities to obtain multiple opinions of different social groups, which affects the nature of citizens participation in decisions. The established feedback creates prerequisites for civil control over the activities of state power structures, individual ministries and departments and simplifies the procedures for obtaining necessary and relevant information by citizens.

The second side of e-participation is characterized by the level of activity of citizens in the application of the above mentioned tools and the way how well the account of citizens ' opinions in the development and adoption of significant political and socio-economic decisions is organized.

Internet technologies of e-government of Canada allow maintaining round-the-clock communication with representatives of the target political audience, providing two-way communication between a politician and a potential voter, a political force and its supporters. E-government of Canada makes possible the emergence of new effective mechanisms of public interaction, including political mobilization of citizens.

Many public services, using information technologies, can provide comprehensive services and better understand the needs of citizens; apply knowledge management. Expert systems based on artificial intelligence and Internet technologies can improve the quality of administrative work and reduce the time of its implementation, automate the processing of accumulated information; management of public resources. Thus, the government Internet portal and its associated site system provide the following e-government functions in Canada:

1. Search and retrieval of information;

2. Interaction of citizens and organizations with public authorities;

3. Holding events by public authorities for citizens and organizations.

At the moment e-government is a key channel for public services in the country, providing nearly a third of all transactions between the Federal government and citizens. The above mentioned statements shows that, despite huge investments in e-services, the governments of most countries of the world are still only trying to meet the expectations of their citizens to improve services. Canada is one of the few countries that have actually managed to achieve a significant improvement in the quality of service through the introduction of e-government. Canada continues to set the standard for the provision of public services for the rest of the world. Yet despite these achievements, Canada still has untapped resources. According to the same survey, only 41% of Canadians believe that the services provided by public organizations are effective.

The latest annual report on Canada's online government program shows that online services now account for more than 30% of all government transactions. Initiated in 1999, the GOL program aimed to make available electronically 130 of the most commonly used services of the Federal government of Canada. Today, as a result of the collective efforts of many state organizations, all these services are online and can be accessed through the Federal portal. In 2013, almost 600 million interactions were between citizens and the Federal government, whereas in 2001 there were only 150 million. [5] In Canada, an e-government program was defined, which includes the following areas: the provision of services in an electronic format, ensuring open access to electronic services of the state, the creation of "guides" for services, the creation of an information security system, the development of standards governing the activities of e-government.

To implement the e-government program, interdepartmental cooperation committees were established in a particular Department. They considered the creation of a unified system for citizens to apply for public services.

The office of the e-government program provided strategic synthesis of goals, presentation of plans, controlled projects, and monitored the activities of the state in the implementation of the program. Currently, the office continues to function, seeking new approaches to the development of the e-government program.

In improving the quality of interdepartmental interaction, the joint interdepartmental councils, consisting of councils on the provision of services, as well as on the management and storage of information, played a significant role.

An important role for the implementation of the e-government feedback program was played by the creation of a research group whose task was to monitor the interests of the population of Canada in obtaining public services through the Internet. The creation of this group was very successful and led to success in the development of e-government through information technology.

As an example of obtaining a service via the Internet, the registration process for newborns in Canada can be cited. After registration, parents apply to the mayor's office and receive a birth certificate. The peculiarity is that these operations can be carried out by persons officially registered on the Internet portal, in order to avoid illegal intrusion into the lives of citizens.

Funding for the e-government program was divided into three stages. Most of the money was spent on protecting citizens ' information and privacy, and only 5% were spent on managing the program.

Currently, the e-government program in Canada has a number of positive reviews. Thus, the survey of citizens showed their positive attitude to receiving services through the Internet. The need for interaction and joint work of ministries and departments was also identified. Their joint activities improve the efficiency of public services. The e-government program in Canada has a long-term nature, so it was laid down a strategic plan for the implementation of long-term services through the Internet. It was also revealed that the creation of an e-government program always requires the creation of long-term strategic plans.

Canada is among the countries with the largest number of Internet users, which explains the high demand for online public services. According to a study by the EKOS Association, which looked at Internet access trends in 2004-2005, 72% of Canadians had access to the World Wide Web from home PCs, and the number of Canadian homes with fast Network access surpassed the number of those with access via modem. In addition, this study also showed the following:

- 71% of Internet users visited the Federal government's Web sites during the past year, and 31% of users confirmed that their most recent contact with the Federal government was via the Internet;

- 81% of Canadian users of e-government services were "satisfied" or "extremely satisfied" with the service;

- 77% of Canadians who have had contact with the Federal government in recent years, said that access to Internet services for them was easy, while for other service channels, ease of access was noted by 67% of users;

- 76% of Internet users believe that it facilitates the search for information about government programs and services;

- 90% of Canadian Netizens and 38% of non-users who plan to connect to the Internet hope to deal with government organizations in the future, and 42% of the Canadian population believes that in the next five years they will carry out most of their transactions with the Federal government online [6].

Thus, the transition to the information society involves the transformation of public administration and political institutions, taking into account the requirements of the new era. The number of individuals and institutions using the Internet is growing rapidly. The rapidly changing reality and political situation dictate the state structures to work and react with maximum speed. There is a growing need for greater mobility of public services, which implies the principles of transparency and flexibility in their work.

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