

Social media plays an important role in shaping public opinion due to its ability to quickly disseminate ideas and opinions. For example, movements such as #MeToo and Black Lives Matter have gained widespread support due to the active use of social media. These platforms have allowed people to share their stories and unite around common goals, which has led to significant social change.

In addition, social media has become an arena for discussing current political issues. Politicians and public figures use these platforms to communicate directly with voters, which allows them to communicate their ideas and programs more effectively. However, this also creates an opportunity to manipulate public opinion through the spread of fake news and disinformation.

Social media serve as a powerful tool for activating civic participation. They allow events such as protests and rallies to be organized and they also raise funds for various initiatives. The platforms become a place for discussing social and political issues, which helps more people to become involved in public life.

An example of this is the use of Twitter to organize protests during the Arab Spring. Social media has become a key tool for mobilizing young people and spreading information about current events. However, it is important to note that such activism can be short-lived and does not always lead to sustainable change.

In conclusion, social media play a multifaceted role in shaping public opinion. They provide access to diverse information, promote civic participation and enable people to unite around common goals. However, they also create risks of manipulation and polarization that can undermine trust in information and complicate public debate.

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THE NEXT STEP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN THOUGHT: «HOW TO SIMPLIFY LIFE?»

Цифровизация – следующий шаг в развитии человеческой мысли: «Как улучшить жизнь?»

This research is going to determine the boundary of the positive effect of digitalization and its possible ways of development in the future. It is also going to cover current laws implemented in order to regulate this process within the Republic of Belarus.

Man has always thought about the question: ‘how to improve life?’, looking for ways to get more results with the least cost. Safety, increased productivity, time saving are some of the main triggers of scientific and technological progress, the vivid result of which is the industrial revolution all over the world. But from the steam engines of the 18th century

to the active automation of various spheres of human life, which is characterized by the 21st century, very little time has passed in terms of human history. What helped such a rapid transition?

The answer is obvious: progress in the accumulation, processing and exchange of knowledge, the crowning achievement of which was one of the branches of the industrial revolution – the introduction of information technology or digitalization.

At present, there are many definitions of digitalization, but they all have one thing in common: digitalization is a process aimed at improving the efficiency of the activities in which it is applied. However, one of the key features of it is the ability to process large flows of information, knowledge, databases and, most importantly, to combine different solutions. It allows a person to specialize not in one area of interest, but to study several areas in depth, to find common ground in previously seemingly incomparable things. The uniqueness of digitalization lies in its synergistic effect, which allows benefits to scale at a rapid pace. For example, while not so long ago, robots were mainly used in manufacturing or for state security, today robots are our home assistants. Internet things have become commonplace for mankind, and artificial intelligence provides advice to humans and is constantly self-improving.

And when the new enters our lives so vigorously, it is necessary to clearly understand the risks that may be associated with it. For the safety of humanity, both physical and intellectual, people need to be aware of where the reasonable limits to the introduction of information technology lie, what side effects this process can have, and what methods and tools of control and regulation humans have in their armoury. Obvious risks include: the use of digital systems for terrorist purposes, use of other people's personal data by fraudsters, for anti-state propaganda, industrial or military espionage, hacking of information systems, databases, financial accounts, and so on.

In Belarus, the process of digitalization lies within the legal framework of the Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 455-Z of 10 November 2008 'On Information, Informatization and Information Protection'. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus 'On Digital Development', signed in 2023, defines the main directions of digital development until 2030, which include: the development and introduction of domestic software and hardware, information and other advanced technologies, the creation and use of state digital platforms, regional digital development, including the creation of a state digital platform 'Smart City (Region)', the transfer of at least 75 per cent of administrative procedures into electronic form, within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC).

Conclusion: since digitalization processes are constantly adjusting to the demand of society, business, government, and international cooperation, in order to ensure the moral and ethical aspects of the use of digital resources, as well as to prevent economic abuse, it is necessary to constantly monitor the use of products and resources, the correspondence between planned and actual results, the application of subjects of law, and to improve irrelevant norms of legislation and the results of scientific and technical developments.