

# MODERN INFORMATION MODELS OF THE NATIONAL INTERESTS' PROTECTION POLICY OF THE WORLD COUNTRIES

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## **Abstract**

The paper generalized experience of formation and implementation of the informational direction of policy on protecting national interests of the states and supranational organizations. Authors formed two models – subsidiary (US, UK, EU and NATO) and vertical (Russia) on the base of generalization. Transitional model of the development and implementation of the informational direction of policy on protecting national interests in the conditions of nonlinear processes was proposed. The model reflects modern transformation of Ukraine and transition from a vertical to a subsidiary model.

**Key words:** models of information policy, national interests, national interests' protection policy

Modern world order consists of multi-vector processes, which purpose is to control the global information space, access to metacapital of states and global resources, and marginalization of national interests and national governments. Centers for decision-making and launch of such processes vary from transnational corporations and world leading countries to particular individuals who possess information. The foreign policy of a state and the protection of its national interests are connected to a wide range of issues, risks, and opportunities, the use of the balance between a soft power and a defense system. Information direction in the policy of national interests' protection of the world countries is a high-priority direction in the development of G-8 strategies, and it remains largely underdeveloped in transitive countries, which makes them an easy prey.

This study is topical for Ukraine and its neighbors because, unfortunately, national interests do not determine the nature and content of government decision-making. As a result – Ukraine has lost state integrity and control over its own information space, and currently experiences undeclared war and manipulative official discourse.

The information component in the policy of national interests' protection is the subject of interdisciplinary research for half a century. Various theoretical and applied aspects of this problem are studied in the works of J. Baudrillard [Baudrillard 2016], S. Vnuchko [Vnuchko 2012], J. Habermas [Habermas 2007], V. Horbulin [Horbulin et al. 2010], L. Huberskyi [Huberskyi, Makarenko et al. 2007], S. Danylenko [Danylenko 2015], K. Deutsch [Deutsch 1993], D. Zamiatin [Zamiatin 2014], Y. Komarova [Komarova 2005], V. Lipkan [Lipkan 2006], Y. Mahda [Mahda 2017], Y. Makarenko [Huberskyi, Makarenko et al. 2007], H. Morgenthau [Morgenthau 2000], G. Moskalova [Moskalova 2016], T. Nahorniak [Nahorniak 2013], G. O'Toal [Lyakhovenko 2009], M. Polovyi [Polovyi 2011], G. Pocheptsov [Pocheptsov 2016], V. Prorok [Prorok 2016], L. Smola [Smola 2016], N. Taleb [Taleb 2014], Y. Tykhomyrova [Tykhomyrova 2016], A. Toffler [Toffler 2009], O. Turchenko [Turchenko 2013], L. Fuerth [Fuerth 2011], O. Chaltseva [Chaltseva 2015]. Generalization of the practice on the protection of national interests of such countries as the United States, Great Britain, the Russian Federation, as well as the practice of supranational unions, such as the EU and NATO, shows that there is a common institutional structure. Its main components are central and state authorities, local self-government bodies, territorial communities, civil society institutions, business communities, media, etc.

As for the mechanisms that implement the information direction of the national interests' protection policy, their instruments include: public policy, public diplomacy, interaction with media, new media, special events, public-private partnership.

In spite of the fact that world countries have common features in the implementation of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy, the specificity lies in the development of content and ways of its implementation. This specificity aims to take into account the interests and needs of target audiences; diversify channels and mechanisms for the spread of national interests in politico-imaginative and politico-semantic spaces from vertical to horizontal interaction with internal and external audiences. The emphases, thus, shift in order to attract a wide range of stakeholders for development and implementation of information policy, delegation of authority to system elements which are far from the center, while preserving the main parameters of the policy

(compliance with strategic goals and tasks, orientation towards maintaining the stability of the political system, univocal perception of national interests, etc.).

We have analyzed political and legal principles of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy in the United States, Great Britain, the EU, NATO, and the Russian Federation and found out that the information and psychological influence on competitors plays an important role in conquering external and preserving internal politico-symbolic and politico-semantic spaces, where national interests are aggregated and articulated. There are two models of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy: subsidiary – “western” and vertical – “Russian”. Their comparative analysis showed that the main difference lies in the basic principles of involving the public in the development and implementation of policies, decision-making mechanisms, and management of political space.

The United States, the United Kingdom, the EU, and NATO are oriented for the horizontal information and communication interaction among structural elements of a political system. Its purpose is to create an extensive network of process participants who can independently counteract threats and ensure the implementation of the national interests' protection policy on the ground.

Involvement of the maximum number of stakeholders in policy elaboration and implementation ensures not only understanding of national interests' basic parameters, but also participation in their formation. The strategic priority to create horizontal channels of communication at different levels is one of the features of this approach. This ensures adaptation of information policy to the needs of target audiences and a more flexible reaction to information and communication influences. A compromise and coherence between the interests of the center and the basic elements of the system may reduce the level of influence of destructive factors on the system as a whole, as well as to give possibility of an equivalent response to threats, both from a "decision-making center" (hereinafter - DMC) and from the system's elements.

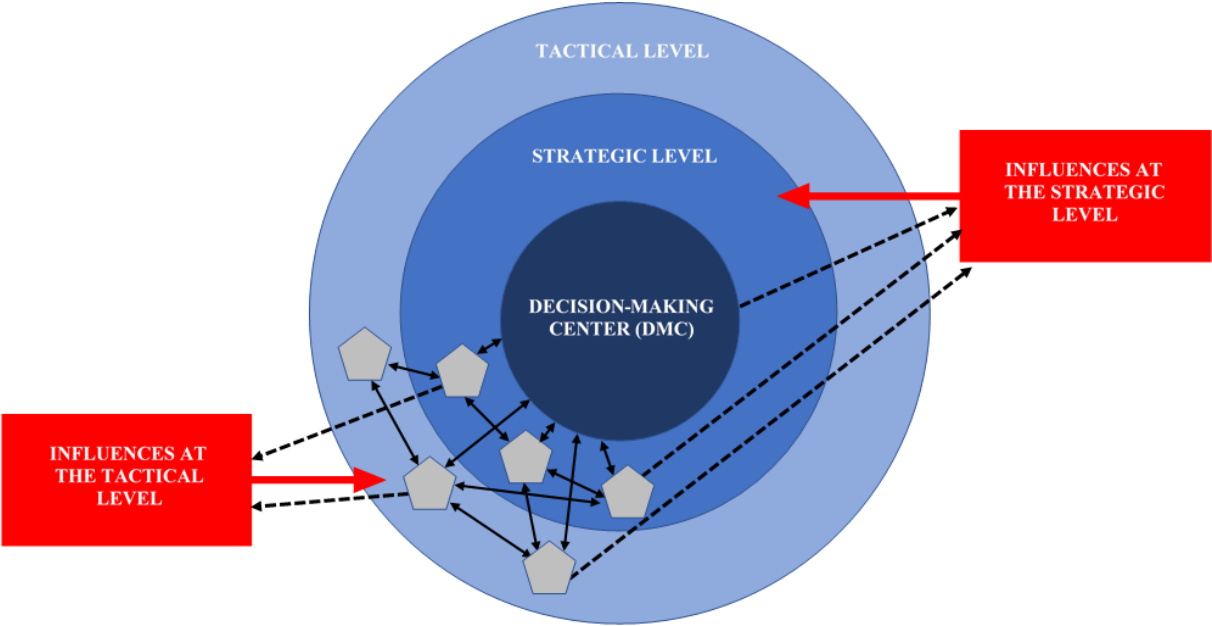
Participation of the central authorities focuses on the development of strategic narratives and the provision of methodological recommendations and assistance when it is impossible for the elements of the system to independently resolve problems in the areas of their responsibility.

Within the delegated powers, civil society and local authorities are limited to the implementation of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy at the local level. As far as the information and communication influences, in most cases, occur at this particular level, local structures must independently fend off attacks and impact internal and external audiences in order to protect national interests within their competencies.

System elements, which fall under the influence, can communicate with other elements and form tactical links among themselves, bypassing the DMC. This gives the possibility to warn potentially vulnerable sectors about probable attacks and to provide the DMC with operative information about the presence of threats, their source and taken actions. The DMC, similarly, sends signals about the possible consequences of the influences that were directed towards it and other sectors, where the basic elements do not intersect. If the problem can not be solved independently, system elements may address the center of the system for assistance.

This model can be conditionally called a subsidiary model of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy. Under subsidiarity we mean the maximum delegation of powers in the area of the national interests' protection to local authorities and civil society institutions, their direct involvement into the development of regional and national policy.

**Fig. 1. The subsidiary model of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy.**



The Russian Federation tends to create a definite vertical for the development and implementation of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy. The participation of a wide range of stakeholders in its elaboration and realization is limited. This model can be called vertical.

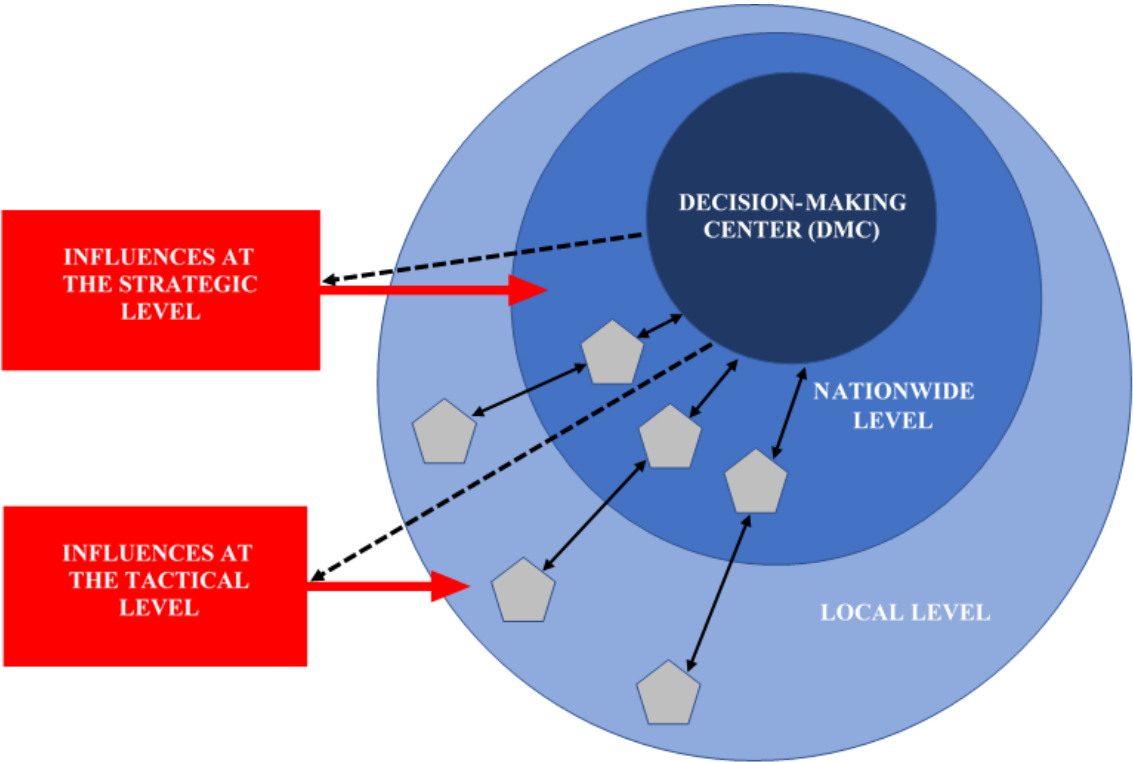
The basic structural elements of the system are the government, ministries and departments, media controlled by authorities, and civil society institutions that execute the agenda developed by the DMC. Powerful control over the information infrastructure (control over the Internet, social networks, mass media, etc.) creates conditions in which the promotion of alternative opinions and information is impossible. External influences are blocked and reduced through the system of censorship, extensive networks of "trolls" and professional "commentators".

Public opinion (sentiments, information and communication needs, expectations and fears of the population) is used to create politico-imaginative and politico-semantic spaces which are fully controlled and governed by power and which will not accept any alternative. The peculiarity of this approach is to construct an impersonal image of a state as a collective simulacrum, which eliminates the consideration of the true interests of interest groups.

External influences, in such conditions, are minimal but with the destruction of the grassroots elements (including controlled media and civil society institutions) and the DMC (a president and/or government) – the entire system is destroyed. The main reason is that grassroots elements cannot independently take decisions about

protecting the system, because they do not have sufficient authority for this. This does not ensure a solid foundation that can resist system failures and preserve the system from destruction. In the long run, the elements of the system start to atrophy and cannot adequately react to challenges without the sanction of the “center”.

**Fig. 2. The vertical model of the information direction of the national interests’ protection policy.**



In modern conditions, it is important for Ukraine to preserve the integrity and independence of the national information space with the participation of basic territorial units at the level of territorial communities, civil society, and regional state administrations. In the conditions of decentralization, territorial communities and civil society are the main drivers of the development of certain local territories, and the regional state administrations are hubs between territorial communities, civil society, and central state authorities.

The transformations taking place in Ukraine, paradigmatic changes in the principles of formation and implementation of state policy, increasing influence of communities and civil society on political decisions – all these require improvements to the model of the information direction of the national interests’ protection policy. The analysis of the implementation of this direction shows the transition from the vertical to the subsidiary model.

The transitional period is determined by the following parameters. Firstly, preliminary practices of implementing a “top-down” policy lose their relevance, because they do not correspond to the current challenges and demands of society. Secondly, decentralization reform expands the authority of territorial communities in the field of territory management, including the information and communication

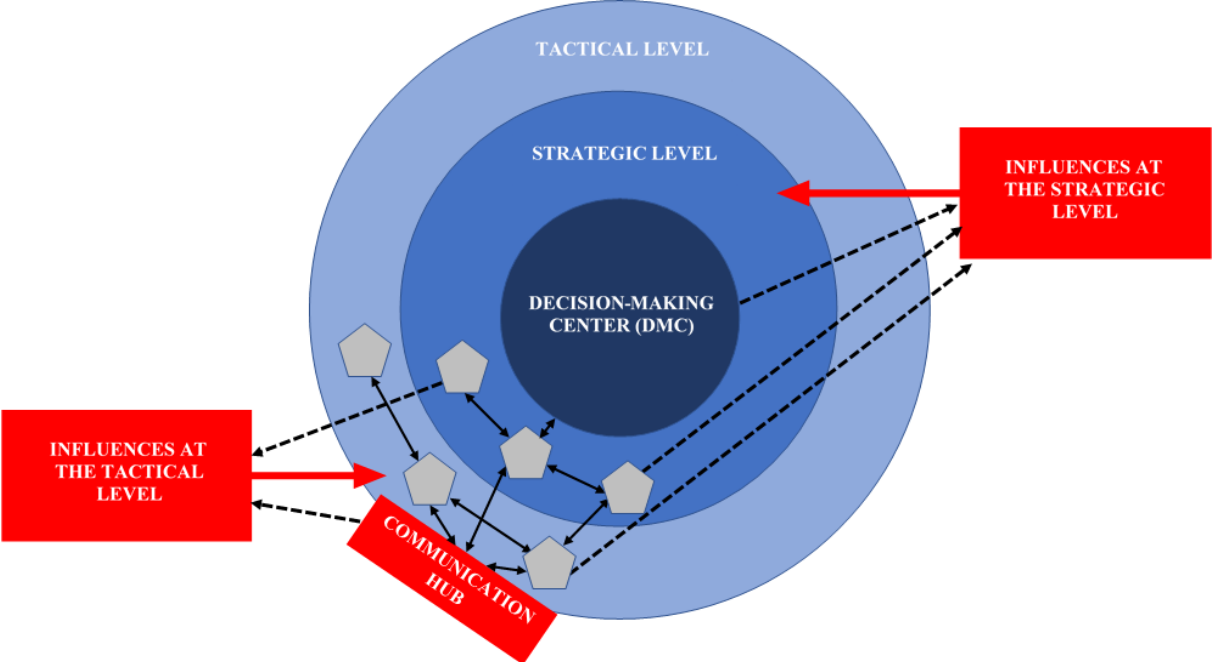
field. Thirdly, mentioned authorities require an appropriate qualification of policy makers. Fourthly, the concentration of political activity in a territorial community should promote the engagement of civil society in the territory management. However, current practices show that civil society institutions are not integrated enough into this process. This happens because of the low professional level of civil society institutions in relation to the development and implementation of policies and due to the lack of understanding how their potential can be used by the state power.

Taking into account the parameters mentioned above, the regional state administrations are the most prepared structures for the implementation of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy on the ground. It is these structures that ought to become communication hubs, which will:

- adapt national policy upon request of local communities;
- help the territorial communities in their formative stages to fend off information attacks and influences;
- moderate the process of communication between the territorial communities and civil society with its target audiences;
- monitor and assess threats;

provide the “center” with a request of a local territorial community and civil society about the agenda of national policy, including the issue on the protection of national interests.

**Fig. 3. The transitional model of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy.**



The transitional model of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy consists of:

- decision-making center – central authorities, which perform the functions of state management at the national level. These are, first of all, the Presidential Administration, the National Security and Defense Council, the Ministry of Information Policy;
- network elements – a set of structural units (local self-government bodies, communities, civil society, legal entities and individuals), united by common features such as citizenship, permanent residence in Ukraine, recognition and actions within the limits of national jurisdiction, self-identification as a part of the state, etc. network elements can consist of political institutions (state authorities and local authorities, civil society institutions, media, etc.), but also of separate legal entities (primarily business structure) and private individuals, who influence the political processes inside the state and beyond it;

It should be noted that information and communication activity is not only focused on the work of press services of state and local authorities. It is about the implementation of national interests in the form of semantic and imaginative content of communities' information space, detection of threats, their prevention, the formation of an information agenda, the formation of a request, and the adaptation of the national policy at the local level, etc.

- communication hubs – which are contact nodes between the elements and the DMC. In the context of the model, proposed by the authors of this paper, communication hubs are regional state administrations, which act as a bridge between the central authorities, territorial communities and civil society. The main tasks of such hubs are to identify threats at the local level, to moderate the communication process between a territorial community and a civil society with its target audiences, to adapt the national policy to the demands and needs of a region, to formulate and convey a local agenda to the central authorities. In a transitional period, the communication hubs are responsible for implementation of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy at the tactical level. Most of their functions will be completed when the territorial community and the civil society will be able to manage communication processes and protect national interests at the local level (levels of territorial communities);
- communication channels – a set of technical tools and instruments which broadcast information and provide feedback between structural elements, communication hubs and the network center, both on the horizontal (between elements of the network) and on the vertical (between elements and the center of the network) levels. It should be noted that these communication channels can change their configuration depending on the situation and challenges facing the network elements;
- strategic narratives – a set of images and meanings in which the basic features of national interests, adapted to information and communication needs and demands of target audiences, are laid down.

The basic functions of the model are:

- monitoring and assessment of threats - a special place in this function belong to those elements of the system which are closer to the outer world and direct information and psychological external influences. They act as receptors reacting to any impulses that threaten the state in the external and internal spaces. The information they receive through communication hubs goes to the

DMC for taking strategic decisions at the system level, and, simultaneously, to other elements to ensure prompt information;

- adaptation of the information and communication network to the current conditions and threats, in which the nation-state is located, while preserving the basic parameters (national interests laid down in strategic narratives). Efficient implementation of this function will enable quick customization of individual elements and the network in general under the current conditions;
- mobilization of structural elements with a view to localize separate or series of cases in specific sectors of the system, as well as assistance to other elements of the system in counteraction against threats;
- management of the information and communication field at the level of individual elements (tactical level) and the system as a whole (strategic level);
- communication – information exchange and provision of feedback within the structural elements, between other elements and the center of the system;
- mutual control with regard to the compliance of national and regional policies to the common interests.

The management of the information direction of the national interests' protection policy is implemented at the strategic and tactical levels, as well as at the level of coordination of joint actions between the center and elements of the network.

Under the strategic level we understand a set of administrative actions at the level of central authorities, structures and organizations with national competencies (for example, defense, official international relations with other states, etc.). At this level, the model of strategic communications suggested by the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine fits in logically. Under the tactic level we understand a set of managerial actions at the level of individual elements within the basic parameters of the whole network but in conditions, inherent to each individual element or a group.

Separately, we should highlight the level of coordinated management, which ensures interaction between the elements (communities) and the center of the network (state bodies) through communication hubs (regional state administrations). We believe that at this level it is expedient to introduce the institute of public advisers of the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine, for example, such as public advisers on internally displaced persons, working under the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine with the support of the Government of Great Britain. This program consists of a network of 30 experts who provide advice to specialists on social security at the local and national levels in order to resolve the problems of displaced persons. The program should provide support for cooperation between the authorities and civil society in order to successfully reform social institutions and develop a legal social state [Counselor Program 2017].

Within the suggested model it is appropriate to use two communication strategies – “framing” and “setting the agenda”. According to the Ukrainian researcher M. Ozhevan, “framing” is “a communicative strategy aimed to organize the content of a news message by “inserting” it into a “frame”, i.e., putting it into the context of a certain narrative in order to outline the “correct” perception of news by the mass audience” [Ozhevan 2016: 31]. In other words, under the frames we can consider the whole set of strategic narratives that go from the "center" of the system to its structural elements and determine the basic parameters of national interests, which adapt then to specific regions through communication hubs.



The strategy of “setting the agenda” means to control public perception of a certain reality (political, economic, financial, etc.) by finding and maintaining a certain compromise between “true” and “media” realities [Ozhevan 2016: 31]. In the context of the model described in this paper, this strategy provides a “center” with the request to meet the information and communication needs of its elements and to develop a compromise policy. In case of their satisfaction, the center will be able to form national and regional information and communication agenda. This will give a possibility to harmoniously enter the personal and intergroup agenda of target audiences.

As the Ukrainian researcher V. Horbulin points out, “the definition of own national interests is a topical task for state and political institutions. The state as the subject of politics should not only determine strategic interests. They must be authoritative both for the citizens of this state and for the international community. The strategic interests of the state must be legitimate. The high level of their legitimacy outlines the legal space for institutions, which purpose is to defend these interests, to regulate social, economic and political processes in society” [Horbulin et al. 2010: 42].

The interests of territorial communities and civil society, when taken into consideration, ensure the formation of common, generally supported trends of state development and the adequate response to challenges that threaten national interests. According to the Ukrainian researcher H. Kuts, “the choice can only be complete if there is a freedom of choice, when the access to the full options' palette is open. First of all, it concerns information, which in the modern global world is considered as the most important resource. Free open access to information, promoting full and unbiased personality development, is able to provide individual freedom. Accordingly, the vector of liberal transformations in the Ukrainian political space should be directed at the creation of the widest possible opportunities to provide free choice in various areas of being” [Kutz 2017: 55].

If the system has weakness or the lack of flexibility (adaptive function) nonlinear influences can cause its destruction and the transition to another system's control. In the case there are strong links between structural elements, connected by common goals and understanding of the essence of the system, its strategic goals and interests - it will be the transition to a new level of development that will meet current challenges. As a result, the system will preserve its integrity and will develop in modern conditions.

The effectiveness of information policy depends on the prompt reaction to external influences, the identification and satisfaction of the urgent information needs of target audiences, provision and adjustment to existing conditions without loss of its strategic priorities and preplanned results that meet national interests.

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