

**THE RESULTS OF A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF  
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS IN THE  
PUBLIC HEALTH CONDUCTED IN UKRAINE**  
**РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ЕФЕКТИВНОСТІ ПРОВЕДЕНИХ В  
УКРАЇНІ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНО-КОМУНІКАТИВНИХ КАМПАНІЙ У  
СФЕРІ ГРОМАДСЬКОГО ЗДОРОВ'Я**

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**Abstract**

**Theoretical background:** Information and communication activities are one of the key areas of public health. Thus, the World Health Organization (WHO) singles out operational function 9 among public health operational functions. Advocacy, communication and social mobilization for health. Since 2000, a number of national-level public health information and communication programs have been implemented in Ukraine, but these campaigns have rarely been evaluated for their real impact and effectiveness.

**Aim:** To study the evaluation of the effectiveness of large-scale (national level) information and communication campaigns in the field of public health in Ukraine by representatives of certain target audiences, both in the field of health care and not directly related to the health care sector.

**Methods:** A special sociological study was to develop an online questionnaire (Google-form questionnaire) and disseminate them by disseminating to the audience users of social networks, including Facebook, Instagram. The research period is November 1-30, 2020. The questionnaire contained 26 questions from different thematic blocks: the block of socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent; unit for determining respondents' awareness of national campaigns; respondents' evaluation of the effectiveness of campaigns; a block of respondents' assessment of the effectiveness, impact of campaigns and the commitment of respondents to the dissemination of their content. In total, during the survey period, questionnaires were received from 153 respondents from all regions of Ukraine.

**Results:** Only 7 information and communication campaigns at the national level out of 20 were mentioned by more than 20% of respondents. Only 35.2% of respondents consider them effective. If we consider that the motivation of the target group to search for additional information on the issues raised in the campaign can be considered a sign of the effectiveness of the information campaign, the level of

effectiveness is quite high - only 19 respondents (13.6% of 140 respondents) were not interested in any campaign. 40.5% of respondents also indicated that certain information and communication campaigns influenced them personally, motivating them to take certain actions at the individual level of maintaining their own health.

**Conclusion:** The level of efficiency and effectiveness of information and communication campaigns in the field of public health, which were conducted in Ukraine during 2000-2020, according to the surveyed group of respondents is insufficient. There is a need to develop and implement a methodology and tools for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of public health information and communication campaigns in order to develop recommendations for their improvement.

**Keywords** *Information and communication campaigns, public health, public opinion, Ukraine.*

## **Резюме**

**Теоретична основа:** Інформаційно-комунікаційна діяльність є одним з ключових напрямків роботи системи громадського здоров'я. Так, Всесвітня організація здоров'я (ВОЗ) серед оперативних функцій громадського здоров'я окремо виділяє оперативну функцію 9. Інформаційно-роз'яснювальна діяльність (адвокація), комунікація та соціальна мобілізація в інтересах здоров'я. З 2000 року в Україні було реалізовано низку інформаційно-комунікаційних програм національного рівня у сфері громадського здоров'я, але ці кампанії рідко проходили оцінювання щодо їхнього реального впливу та ефективності.

**Мета:** Вивчити оцінку ефективності масштабних (національного рівня) інформаційно-комунікаційних кампаній в сфері громадського здоров'я в Україні представниками окремих цільових аудиторій як сфери охорони здоров'я, так і безпосередньо не пов'язаних з галуззю охорони здоров'я.

**Методи:** Спеціальне соціологічне дослідження полягало в розробленні онлайн анкети (опитувальника Googl-form) та розповсюдження їх шляхом поширення серед аудиторії користувачів соціальних мереж, зокрема Facebook, Instagram. Період дослідження – 01-30 листопада 2020 року. Опитувальник містив 26 запитань різних тематичних блоків: блок соціально-демографічної характеристики респондента; блок визначення інформованості респондентів про національні кампанії; блок оцінки респондентами ефективності кампаній; блок оцінки респондентами результативності, впливу кампаній та прихильності респондентів до поширення їх змісту. Всього за

період дослідження було отримано анкети від 153 респондентів з усіх регіонів України.

**Результати:** Лише 7 інформаційно-комунікаційних кампаній національного рівня із 20 пригадало більше 20% опитаних. Вважають їх ефективними лише 35,2% опитаних респондентів. Якщо вважати, що ознакою результативності інформаційної кампанії можна розглядати і мотивацію представників цільової групи до пошуку додаткової інформації з піднятих в кампанії питань, то рівень результативності є доволі високим - лише 19 опитаних (13,6% із 140 респондентів) не зацікавились жодною піднятою в кампанії проблемою. 40,5% опитаних також вказали, що окремі інформаційно-комунікаційні кампанії вплинули на них особисто, мотивуючи до окремих дій на індивідуальному рівні збереження власного здоров'я.

**Висновки:** Рівень ефективності та результативності інформаційно-комунікаційних кампаній у сфері громадського здоров'я, які проводилися в Україні протягом 2000-2020 років, на думку опитаної групи респондентів є недостатнім. Є необхідність розробки і впровадження методології та інструментів моніторингу і оцінки ефективності та результативності інформаційно-комунікативних кампаній у сфері громадського здоров'я з метою розробки рекомендацій щодо їх удосконалення.

### ***Ключові слова***

Інформаційно-комунікаційні кампанії, громадське здоров'я, суспільна думка, Україна.

### **Introduction.**

Information and communication activities are one of the key areas of public health. Thus, the World Health Organization (WHO) singles out operational function among the operational functions of public health. 9. Advocacy, communication and social mobilization for health, including communication in the field of health health, which is aimed at improving health literacy and improving the health of individuals and the general population [SLABKY, MYRONYUK, KACHALA 2017, p.30]. In addition, the effectiveness of programs and individual interventions in the field of public health largely depends on the effective communication of providers in the field of health improvement and preservation with the target groups of the population targeted by these services [SLABKY, SHAFRANSKY, MYRONYUK, KRUCHANITSYA 2016, p.24.]. Researchers point to the importance and role of effective communication in combating risk factors for chronic non-communicable diseases [GRAHAM, AMOS, PLUMPTRE 2003, P.4.], Ensuring road safety for children and increasing physical activity

[KRAVCHENKO 2014, p.97.]. Ukraine has long had an outdated model of disease prevention and population health at the population level. In this model, a person was perceived as an object of the process, who did not have his own attitude to these processes and was not able to control them. Subsequently, such an administrative-command method of implementing preventive measures has led to the fact that the population stopped supporting the ideas of vaccination, screening, a healthy lifestyle. Lack of knowledge about health, disease prevention and treatment has led to the spread of false information and the popularity of alternative treatments, as well as the loss of trust in the medical field in general. In addition, poor communication and high levels of information have created a precondition for lowering confidence in key public health institutions. At the same time, world practice proves that the effective functioning of the public health system is impossible without the coordination of actions of all stakeholders is impossible without well-established communication between them. Integrated efforts of the whole society are also important for overcoming public health challenges [VOROBYOV 2011, p.12].

For a long time, there was no single public health spokesperson in Ukraine. The Ministry of Health did not create or disseminate information to the public. Local governments, in the form of health departments, also largely played administrative and managerial functions in building the system and maintaining funding for health facilities. NGOs and patients' organizations, which began to appear in Ukraine after 1991, chose their areas of communication solely in the direction of their activities, such as HIV or assistance to people with disabilities. Scientific institutions and institutions of higher medical education were also not involved in the organized promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Individual doctors or scientists have begun to communicate in the field of public health and prevention. Some publications published in the late 1990s provided advice and advice on non-evidence-based health and non-traditional medicine. With the development of Internet technologies, a large number of Ukrainians began to consume information about health and disease from Internet sites and communities. As with the print media, health information was largely based on the conjectures and empirical experience of the contributors. The television media at that time mostly spread information with stories about poor quality medical care and bribes in medicine, which generally created a negative image of the medical community. Thus, communication in the field of public health has become segmented, with a high percentage of information noise [IVASHCHENKO 2017, p.323]. At the same time, large-scale health information campaigns were periodically conducted in the country. For example, a number of national-level public health information and

communication programs have been implemented in Ukraine since 2000, but these campaigns have rarely been evaluated for their real impact and effectiveness.

### **Aim**

To study the evaluation of the effectiveness of large-scale (national level) information and communication campaigns in the field of public health in Ukraine by representatives of certain target audiences, both in the field of health care and not directly related to the health care sector.

### **Methods**

The object of the study were information and communication strategies in public health of Ukraine. Subject of research: the effectiveness of information and communication campaigns in the field of public health at the national level. The main method of research was sociological. A special sociological survey consisted of developing an online questionnaire (Google questionnaire), which would reveal the level of awareness of respondents about large-scale information and communication campaigns in the field of public health and assess their effectiveness and dissemination by distributing them among social media users. , in particular Facebook, Instagram. The research period is November 1-30, 2020. Actually, the questionnaire contained 26 questions from different thematic blocks: the block of socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent; unit for determining respondents' awareness of national campaigns; respondents' evaluation of the effectiveness of campaigns; a block of respondents' assessment of the effectiveness, impact of campaigns and the commitment of respondents to the dissemination of their content. At the stage of forming the questionnaire by the method of content analysis, a list of the largest information and communication campaigns in the field of public health at the national level, which were implemented in Ukraine in the period from 2000 to the first half of 2020 inclusive. As a result, 20 information and communication campaigns were included in the questionnaire. The results of the study were processed using the MS Office 2010 application suite.

In total, during the survey period, questionnaires were received from 153 respondents from all regions of Ukraine. Most questionnaires were received from residents of Odessa and Odessa region - 94 questionnaires (64.4% of the total) and Kyiv and Kyiv region - 24 questionnaires (15.7%). Representatives of other regions of Ukraine were represented to a lesser extent: Lviv and Mykolaiv regions in 8 and 5 questionnaires (5.2% and 3.3%, respectively, other regions in 1-2 questionnaires. Among the respondents were 118 women (77.1% respondents) and 35 men (22.9%).

Among the respondents are representatives of all age groups from 18 to 75 years (Table 1).

**Tab. 1** Distribution of respondents by age groups

<b>Age group (years)</b>	<b>N=153</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>18-21</b>	5	3,3
<b>22-35</b>	60	39,2
<b>36-60</b>	85	55,6
<b>61-75</b>	2	1,3
<b>More than 75</b>	1	0,7

The largest share among the respondents who answered the questionnaire are representatives of the age group 36-60 years - 85 people and the age group 22-35 years - 60 people, which was 55.6% and 39.2%, respectively. This age distribution is to be expected, given that online questionnaires were mainly distributed through social networks.

Important for the purpose of the study is the sign of belonging of respondents to the health care system in general, and the sphere of public health in particular. Therefore, in the questionnaire, respondents were asked to provide information on their affiliation with their professional activities in the field of health care, public health and non-governmental organizations working to preserve the health of the population. Analysis of respondents' responses to their affiliation or involvement in health care is presented in Table 2.

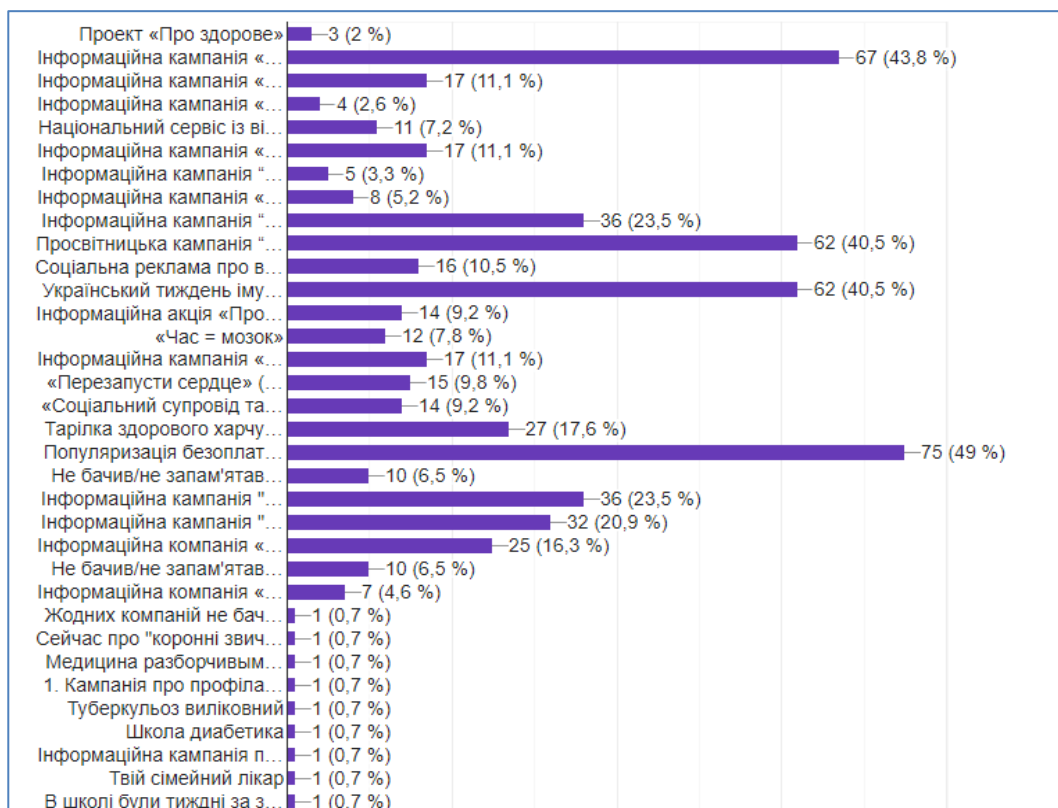
**Tab. 2** Affiliation of respondents to health care (HC)

<b>Group of affiliation to HC</b>	<b>N=153</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Healthcare professional (doctor, paramedic, nurse, etc.)</b>	73	47,7
<b>Public health professional</b>	4	2,6
<b>Representative of a non-governmental organization related to medicine / public health</b>	7	4,6
<b>Not related to medicine / public health</b>	69	45,1

As can be seen from the table, the majority of respondents are to some extent related to the health care system (54.9%), although the share of respondents who are not related to health care in their professional activities is also significant - 45.1 % of respondents.

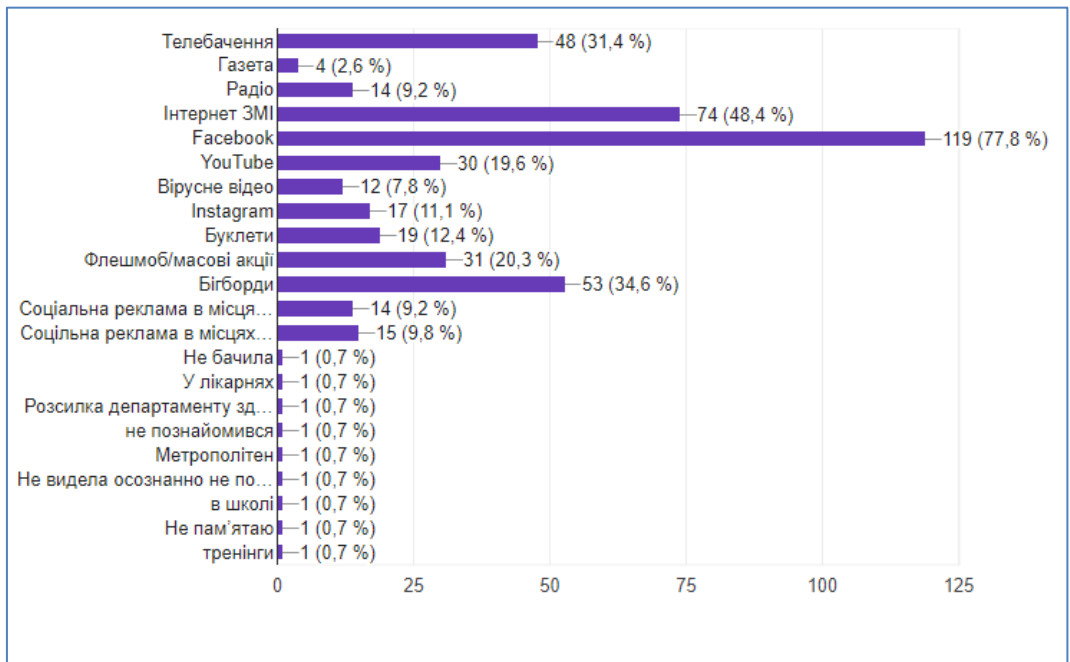
## Results

The general analysis of the results of the survey was conducted on certain blocks of questions, the purpose of which was to determine the separate awareness of respondents about national campaigns; respondents' assessment of the effectiveness of campaigns; respondents' assessment of the effectiveness, impact of campaigns and commitment of respondents to the dissemination of their content. Thus, the analysis of the questionnaires, which were aimed at determining the level of awareness of respondents about national information and communication campaigns in the field of public health, conducted in Ukraine during 2000-2020, showed that different campaigns were remembered by respondents to varying degrees. This is illustrated by the answers of the respondents to the question: "Indicate among the listed information campaigns that you have heard or seen related materials", which is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "Indicate among the listed information campaigns about which you have heard or seen related materials" (N = 153)**

Among the proposed list were information campaigns mentioned by more than 40% of respondents. The information campaign "Promotion of free donation" was mentioned by 75 respondents, which was 49% of respondents; Also, a large proportion of respondents mentioned some information campaigns: "Do not give AIDS a chance" - 67 respondents (43.8%), educational campaign "Flu: simple things save lives" and Ukrainian Immunization Week were noted by 62 respondents (40.5% of respondents)). More than 20% of respondents also mentioned the information campaigns "Patient has the right", "Drink - do not get behind the wheel" and "Plate of healthy eating". Other campaigns were mentioned by a small number of respondents (Figure 1). Separately, we identified priority channels of communication with the target group, namely with the respondents of this sociological study. Results of the answer to the question: "Through which information channel did you get acquainted with the information campaign?" presented in Fig.2.



**Figure 2. Information channels through which respondents got acquainted with information campaigns in the field of public health (N = 153)**



Among the channels for obtaining information about information and communication campaigns in the field of public health, the leading place is occupied by Internet resources: social networks, Internet media and You Tube. Quite a large share of respondents also noted television (48 people, 31.4% of respondents) and street advertising (53 people, 34.6 respondents). Printed information resources (newspapers, booklets, information leaflets) were noted by a small number of respondents.

The main question from the unit of determining the vision of the effectiveness of information and communication campaigns was: "Does the information campaign (social advertising) solve the problem?". The unequivocal answer "Yes" was given by 51 respondents, which amounted to 35.2% of respondents. The vast majority answered "No" or "Not sure" - 21 (14.5%) and 51 (35.2%) respondents, respectively. A wider range of answers to the question, which reflects the effectiveness of information and communication campaigns, is presented in table 3.

**Tab. 3** Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "Did any communication and information campaign push you to seek additional information about the issue?"

<b>Answer options</b>	<b>N=140</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes, I'm always looking for more information</b>	31	22,1
<b>Some campaigns made me read additional materials</b>	59	42,2
<b>Once or twice I found additional information</b>	31	22,1
<b>I was never interested in the information campaign</b>	19	13,6

Importantly, of the 140 respondents who answered this question and recalled some public health information and communication campaigns, only 19 respondents (13.6%) were not interested in any of the issues raised in the campaign. In other cases, at least once, the respondents sought additional information on the proposed issue of maintaining and improving health.

We assessed the impact of information and communication campaigns based on the results of the analysis of answers to the question: "Have you been influenced

by the information and communication campaign? (abandoned a bad habit, passed tests, began to lead a healthy lifestyle, etc.) ". As a result, 62 respondents (40.5% of respondents) directly influenced the information campaign. 85 (55.6%) and 6 (3.9%) respondents, respectively, did not influence or refused to answer. We studied the level of commitment to addressing the issues raised in the information and communication campaigns by analyzing the answers to the question: "Have you shared visual materials of any health information campaigns on your own social media pages?". Of the 144 respondents who answered this question, the majority (96 people, 66.7%) answered in the affirmative.

## **Discussion**

Given the design of the study, some limitations need to be considered when evaluating the results obtained. In particular, the research methodology provided for the sending of online questionnaires via the Internet using primarily social networking services: in particular Facebook, Instagram. Thus, the results are a reflection of the opinion of the population who are users of these social networks. Importantly, 98.7% of respondents received the questionnaire through the social network Facebook, which was reflected in the distribution of respondents by age, in particular in the age group over 21, and a small proportion of people aged 18-21, who are also active users of social networks, but mostly others. Also, among the respondents who answered the questionnaire, there is a significant share of persons directly involved in the field of health care (54.9% of respondents (which affected the results.

At the same time, it is noteworthy that even taking into account these limitations of the study, only 7 information and communication campaigns at the national level out of 20 were mentioned by more than 20% of respondents. Only 35.2% of respondents consider them effective. If we consider that the motivation of the target group to search for additional information on the issues raised in the campaign can be considered a sign of the effectiveness of the information campaign, the level of effectiveness is quite high - only 19 respondents (13.6% of 140 respondents) were not interested in any campaign. problem. 40.5% of respondents also indicated that certain information and communication campaigns influenced them personally, motivating them to take certain actions at the individual level of maintaining their own health.

## **Conclusion**

The results obtained by us show that the level of efficiency and effectiveness of information and communication campaigns in the field of public health, which were conducted in Ukraine during 2000-2020, according to the surveyed group of

respondents is insufficient. It should be borne in mind that the research group is represented by the vast majority of active users of Internet resources, including social networks, and a significant proportion of respondents are connected to the health care system. In general, the following conclusions can be drawn from the results:

- Since 2000, Ukraine has conducted a number (about 20) national public health awareness campaigns of varying duration, density and impact.
- Only about a third of respondents (35.2%) indicated that these campaigns are effective, while 40.5% of respondents noted the impact of individual campaigns on them personally.
- A significant proportion of respondents (66.7%) personally participated in the dissemination of information on health issues (including information campaigns)
- The main sources of information are Internet resources (social networks), television and outdoor advertising.
- There is a need to develop and implement a methodology and tools for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of public health information and communication campaigns in order to develop recommendations for their improvement.

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