

Methodology for Analyzing the Manageability of Country Communication Modes

Valentina V. Komleva 

National Research Institute for Communications Development, Moscow, Russia;
Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration,
Moscow, Russia,
komleva@nicrus.ru, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5376-0984>

Abstract. Analyzing of communication modes is a new direction not only in Russian, but also in foreign studies. As a result, methodology is just being formed. The article is devoted to the description of the author's methodology, which allows to identify the types of management and the degree of controllability of communication modes in different countries. The author relies on a systematic, cybernetic approach, on the theory of complex systems, uses the matrix method and the method of comparative analysis. Manageability is defined as a measure of control by the the management center (management entities that make decisions about rules and communication institutions), taking into account the voluntary consent of the objects of management with the level of their autonomy and subordination. The basis of the author's methodology are three significant parameters: 1) location (inside or outside the country); 2) level of conventionality of the communication regime management centre; 3) assessment of the indicators of manageability. The main criteria of manageability are: the ability of communication mode control centres to transfer it from one state to another without conflict; the ability to achieve the controlled parameters of communication mode; the ability to use the mechanisms of self-organization and self-reflection of control objects to regulate communication modes.

Keywords: manageability, communication regime, communication order, information order, political governance, political regime, communication theories

For citation: Komleva V.V. Methodology for Analyzing the Manageability of Country Communication Modes. *Russia & World: Scientific Dialogue*. 2022. No. 3(5). pp. 94-107, [https://doi.org/10.53658/RW2022-2-3\(5\)-94-107](https://doi.org/10.53658/RW2022-2-3(5)-94-107)

Introduction

The controllability of communication regimes is a key direction of research, as it is related to the processes of ensuring the stable functioning of social systems, the rules of domestic and foreign political communication and the degree of political and information sovereignty of the country. The problem of controllability of communication regimes is practically not developed, which is confirmed by a small number of studies. Addressing the issue of controllability in broad terms shows that the most significant studies have been undertaken in system approach (2; 1; 4; 15 etc.). But even in this approach, despite a relatively long history of system research, there is still no unambiguous understanding of what controllability is and how to determine it. This is very significant if we analyze and compare basic Russian works on the problem of controllability (12; 5; 11 etc.). With regard to the controllability of country communication regimes, the situation is exacerbated by the relatively recent introduction of the very concept of “country communication regime” into scientific use (7; 8; 9; 10) and, as a result, the paucity of studies of communication regimes.

Materials and methods

The methodology of the research is based on system, cybernetic and institutional approaches, the provisions of the theory of complex systems, according to which the study of controllability of the communication regime in each particular country can be conducted by analyzing the systemic connections between subjects and objects of communication regimes management and degrees of their institutionalization.

In an empirical study of country practices, the method of comparative analysis, grouping of facts and typology of communication regimes was used. The developed research methodology is based on the method of analytical matrices.

In this method, the collection of empirical material is carried out mainly within the framework of desk research using content analysis of documents, socio-political discourses, media materials, event analysis of the practices of communication regimes in different countries, and then a sociological survey (at the second stage of the study to identify the share of those who agree/disagree with the rules of the communication regime and the share of those who approve/disapprove of the actions of the communications control center) and interviews with experts (if there is a need for further specific information or if there is lack of information in open data sources).

Results

The essence of controllability of country communication regimes

In scientific research, controllability is considered as a combination of three components: order, control, consistency. A.V. Tikhonov considers controllability as a degree of impact of relations or connections of management on social interactions of people in the process of their joint activities (15).

Taking into account this approach, we define the controllability of country communication regimes as a result of the successful implementation of the three main functions of the subject of management:

- 1) arrangement of all relations within the controlled system;
- 2) control and implementation of decisions made;
- 3) consent of the communication participants about the goals, norms, rules, value

constructs of the communication regime.

Arrangement and control are achieved as a result of well-targeted influence through the adoption of regulatory legal acts and other regulatory documents, as well as through the establishment of organizations and structures. In other words, due to the institutionalization of communication regimes. Consistency of the goals, values and actions of the communication participants is achieved through the motivated involvement of participants in communication, when the majority of the participants (or each of them) voluntarily and consciously focuses on the goals and strategies adopted in the country. The review by E.E.Tarando on the monograph by M.V. Rubtsova rightly notes:

The basis for achieving communicative controllability is the process of joint creation of the rules of interaction and voluntary compliance with them. At the same time, the main problem of controllability is transformed from the problem of subordination to the person-subject of control into the problem of obeying the rule. This subordination creates the possibility of rational intervention into the process, that is, control. To use communicative controllability, institutional rules must be made as transparent as possible, since communication is disrupted when confronted with latent and shadow factors. (14)

A failure in the implementation of at least one of the three components mentioned above leads to a failure in the controllability of the communication regime. This happens not only because of the errors of the subjects and objects of management of communication regimes, but also due to objective reasons. For example, laws tend to be conservative and create a certain inertia that can lead to the stagnation of communication regimes. This is most clearly manifested in situations where a changing society ceases to agree with the accepted norms of social communication. In this case, the element of voluntariness and consistency of positions of all participants in communication begins to break down. If the subjects of management do not respond adequately and do not give the right feedback to the groups and individuals who do not agree with the old rules and practices

of the communication regime, then the risk of confrontation increases significantly and a favorable situation arises for external intervention.

Communication regime is characterized by the desire of control center for maximum control over communications in society, for which the entire communication system is institutionalized. For their part, the objects of management only partly obey the requirements of the control center, as they strive for a certain degree of freedom, receiving different information, including alternative, from various sources. In communication regimes an underlying problem of public administration is manifested: the struggle of subjects of management for control and the struggle of objects of management for independence. If the conflict deepens and it is impossible to find a compromise, both groups of participants of communication seek external help. And then another problem arises – external influences on the internal political situation in the country in the interests of external actors, up to the loss of independence by national actors in decision-making.

From those positions, the controllability of country communication regimes is a measure of control over country communications by the national control center (subject of management that makes decisions regarding the rules and institutions of intra-country and external communication), taking into account the degree of spontaneity and independence of objects of management that is necessary to meet the demand for free search for information and to keep the system within the given boundaries with the aim of achieving the agreed goals of its existence. In other words, controllability is a measure of control, with which society agrees and within which society voluntarily internalizes and obeys the accepted rules, norms, and restrictions.

Inside the communication regime, the potential for conflict always remains, since on the one hand, the actors of communication tend to strive for freedom and self-expression, on the other hand, for solidarity and affiliation. Disagreement of the majority of the society with the norms and rules of communication, degree of restrictions and control, the goals of state policy leads to social turmoil and creates conditions for the increased uncontrollability of communication regimes. As soon as the control center loses control over social communications, a fork in control arises. Often, in order to maintain controllability, the authorities have to impose negative sanctions and introduce new prohibitive and restrictive measures. An example is the political events in Belarus in 2020 and the laws adopted regarding the media in 2021. For example, a ban on real-time coverage of mass events held with the violation of the law; a ban on publishing the results of opinion polls conducted without accreditation of the organization conducting the survey; granting the prosecutors in Minsk and the regions the right to restrict access to internet resources and online publications that disseminate information aimed at promoting extremism; granting the right to the Interdepartmental Commission on Security in the field of information to decide on the presence of information, the dissemination of which is capable of harming national interests; the right of the Ministry of information to decide on termination of the publication of the media (if, for example, the owner of the online publication received two or more written warnings); a ban on the establishment of mass media by citizens and legal entities of other states and persons without citizenship.

Parameters of the analytical matrix of controllability of country communication regimes

One of the main indicators of controllability is the ability to transfer the system from one state to another without conflict. The Belarusian case of 2020-2021 demonstrates the controllability of the country's communication regime through the conscious updating of the norms and rules of socio-political communication by government institutions. As a result, the communication regime remained under the control of the conventional control center – the current government, although it was the contradictions that arose during the socio-political conflict of August 2020 that pushed for such changes. Note that in cybernetics, where the term “controllability” was introduced, controllability is closely related to subordination; so cybernetically, controllability means the ability of a system to achieve controlled parameters. Thus, the second indicator of the controllability of communication regimes is the ability of government institutions to achieve controlled parameters of the communication regime. What is meant here is a wide range of parameters set by the communication regime of a particular country.

The third indicator is related to the ability of the authorities to use the mechanisms of self-organization and self-reflection of objects of management to regulate communication regimes. The point is that in modern conditions of non-equilibrium, non-linearity and the rise of self-reflection of communication participants, it is increasingly difficult to keep controllability of communication regimes through control and subordination. The autonomy and self-organization of social actors increasingly determine their reactions to the regulatory influences of the authorities up to confrontation. In this regard, it is appropriate to use the creative energy of self-organization to form communication regimes that is to involve self-organizing communication networks and information channels, especially citizen journalism, in communication with the authorities.

To summarize, we derive the first parameter for the analytical matrix of the study of communication regimes – controllability indicators. These will include at least: (1) the ability of the communication regime control center to control and implement the decisions made; (2) the ability of the control center to transfer the communication system from one state to another without conflict; (3) the ability to reach consensus – the consent of the participants in communication about the goals, norms, rules, value constructs, institutions of the communication regime and control measures; (4) the ability to use self-organization mechanisms to regulate communication regimes.

The second parameter of the analytical matrix of controllability of communication regimes is the location of the control center. Most frequently, the control center that establishes the rules of the communication regime and controls their implementation is the institutions of state authority. They make laws, they regulate communications in society, they impose sanctions for non-compliance with the rules, and they reward the most loyal participants in communication.

In a situation of low trust in state subjects of communications management and high trust in non-state actors, provided that the norms and rules proposed by non-state actors are valuable, the center of communications control is shifting towards alternative centers. Examples of such alternative centers of communication regimes management can be government institutions of other states; religious organizations; mass media and other information channels (including citizen journalism); power-wielding groups that came into conflict with each other as a result of a split in the elites; civil institutions (for example, international NGOs); business (owning communication and information channels); security institutions (in case of their contradictions with the current government); supranational authorities and other actors. An attempt to take control of the communication regime by actors who are alternative to state institutions was demonstrated in Belarus in 2020.

The third parameter of the analytical matrix is the conventionality of the communication regimes control center. Conventional control centers are those that have the right to legitimately establish communication rules, lay down the foundations of state information policy, establish communication institutions, monitor the implementation of rules and impose sanctions for their non-compliance. Non-conventional control centers are self-proclaimed centers making decisions regarding the norms and rules for the implementation of decisions of conventional centers.

Acceptance by the society of non-conventional centers often leads to non-conventional behavior of certain groups of civil society.

Thus, we offer at least two approaches to grouping the control centers of country communication regimes:

- 1) as regards to the degree of their conventionality, we single out conventional and non-conventional centers for managing country communication regimes;
- 2) as regards to the location of the control center, we distinguish external and internal centers for managing country communication regimes.

The location of the control center outside the country is considered by us as a special case of controllability, which does not always give rise to uncontrollability of regimes on the part of national control centers. Conventionality / non-conventionality and the location of the centers – official regulators underlie the methodology for the primary analysis of country communication regimes developed by us.

Matrix for analyzing the communication regimes management types

Within the framework of the given matrix, the analysis is carried out along two axes: 1) we determine where the communication regimes control center is located; 2) we determine whether it is conventional (legitimate) or not. The matrix that allows determining the types of management of communication regimes is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Matrix for the analysis of communication regimes management types

Degree of conventionality	Conventional	1	2
	Non-conventional	4	3
		Internal	External
		The location of communication regimes control center	

At the intersection of the axes of conventionality and the location of the control center, four types of management of communication regimes are formed.

Type 1: The conventional communication regimes control center is located within the country. An example of this type is the communication regime of the Russian Federation, in which, despite the federal system, the communication regime control center is located at the federal level. Decisions are made in the Presidential Executive Office, in the Security Council of the Russian Federation and in a number of “think tanks”.

Harmonization and adoption of the norms and rules is carried out in the State Duma and in the Federation Council. At the preparatory stages, various kinds of civil institutions can be involved, for example, civic chambers and expert councils. Law enforcement and security agencies monitor the implementation of the norms and rules. The federal component is contained in the specific features of the formation of regional communication regimes that do not contradict the basic norms and rules developed for the entire territory of the Russian Federation. A multi-component Russian society (in relation to religions, ethnic groups, climatic conditions, regional societies, etc.) creates the preconditions for the diversity of regional communication regimes, in which informal regulators (traditions, customs, stereotypes) of the living population are sometimes manifested (for example, the Chechen Republic, the Republic of Tatarstan and etc.).

Type 2: conventional control center is located outside the country.

The actions of a control center of this type, as a rule, are consistent with the actions of the national center (state authorities). Most often, such practices occur in integration associations with the presence of supranational governing bodies. An example would be the European Union and the system of country communication regimes formed within the common European communication space, voluntarily dependent on a common European control center.

Type 3: non-conventional center is located outside the country.

This type of communication regimes control, as a rule, is short-lived, as it evolves over time towards the first or second type. An example of an attempt to establish this type of control can be the Republic of Belarus, when, for a short period of time, efforts were made by alternative actors located in Poland to seize control of communications and regulate them according to other norms and rules. It should not be denied that these norms and rules were approved and supported by part of the Belarusian society (but not the majority). However, the conventional control center utilized all available resources to return to the first type of communication regime and by 2021 through the adoption of a number of regulatory

legal acts and sanctions against external alternative centers and finally secures the status of the only internal communication regime control center in the country. If the majority of the society agrees with the accepted rules and norms, then in the near future, external alternative actors are unlikely to be successful in controlling the communication regime.

Type 4: non-conventional center is located within the country

An example of this type can be the communication regime in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, where the conventional center no longer ensures the controllability of the communication regime and the Taliban (banned in the Russian Federation) establishes control over communications.

The identified types of management of communication regimes do not deny the presence of transitional or mixed types, do not deny the presence of «halftones» and «non-pure» types of control, which can be identified while analyzing numerous country practices.

For a detailed analysis of the communication regime in a particular country, at least the following questions have to be answered:

Table 1.

To identify the location of the control center	To identify the degree of conventionality/non-conventionality
Who establishes (consults, develops, adopts) the legal framework for the communication regime in a particular country?	Who authorized and entrusted these particular subjects of management of communication regimes with the functions of establishing the legal framework?
Are decisions on the rules of communication in the country made influenced by traditions, customs, religion and other informal factors?	What are the reactions of the control center to non-compliance with the norms and rules established by it due to the more significant role of traditions? / Is it possible to not comply with the norms and rules with impunity due to the higher role of traditions?
Who decides on the punishment for the infringement of rules and regulations and/or on rewarding the most loyal participants?	Who authorized exactly these subjects of management and entrusted them with the functions of imposing sanctions (punishment and reward) with regard to the objects of communication regimes management?
Are there multiple facts of mass protests of management objects dissatisfied with the accepted norms and rules of socio-political communication?	What is the proportion of citizens who approve the decisions and actions of the control center?

At the second stage of the primary study of country communication regimes, it is proposed to analyze the conventionality and location of the control center, taking into account the attributes of controllability of communication regimes (discussed above). This will reveal the features of controllability in a particular type of management of communication regimes. Schematically, the relationships between controllability attributes and types of management are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The matrix of qualitative study of the characteristics of the controllability of country communication regimes in different types of their management

Criteria for controllability of CR	TYPE 1 of CR MANAGEMENT The conventional communication regimes control center is located within the country	TYPE 2 of CR MANAGEMENT The conventional control center is located outside the country	TYPE 3 of CR MANAGEMENT The non-conventional center is located outside the country	TYPE 4 of CR MANAGEMENTThe non-conventional center is located within the country
Control and implementation of the decisions made (specific features are identified in each type of CR)				
The ability of the authorities to transfer the communication system from one state to another without conflict (specific features are identified in each type of CR)				
Consensus – the consent of the participants in communication about the goals, norms, rules, value constructs, institutions of the communication regime and control measures (specific features are identified in each type of CR)				
The ability of the authorities to use self-organization mechanisms to regulate communication regimes (specific features are identified in each type of CR)				

Accepted abbreviations:

CR – communication regime

The cells of this table are filled in with the qualitative information for each specific country. The main goals are:

- to identify and characterize the center / centers of management of the country’s communication regime;
- to identify and describe the factors and conditions under which the controllability of the communication regime in the country is maintained / lost;
- to identify and analyze the main norms and rules of the country communication regime, on which public agreement has been reached;
- to identify and analyze the norms and rules of the country communication regime, which create controversy and even confrontation;
- to identify potentially conflict-generating parameters of the communication regime.

Discussion

The described methodology is used by the author of the article in the process of a comprehensive comparative study of country communication regimes. Comparison of the results obtained for different countries makes it possible to attribute certain communication regimes to specific types of management and determine the degree of their controllability, as well as to identify transitional types and subtypes of communication regimes management. The results of our studies of the communication regimes of foreign

countries were partially presented and discussed at scientific discussions¹ and will be presented in further publications.

Undoubtedly, the proposed research methodology using matrices and typology of communication regimes can be supplemented and expanded by other methods and approaches. New ideas come in the process of empirical analysis and comparison of country practices. Therefore, we are interested in attracting a wide range of participants to jointly explore country communication regimes.

Conclusions

The controllability of country communication regimes can be defined as a measure of control on the part of the control center (subjects of management that make decisions regarding the rules and institutions of communication) with the voluntary consent of the objects of management with the degree of their autonomy and subordination. Regime is reproduced when society voluntarily internalizes and recognizes the accepted rules, norms, restrictions, institutions and structures that regulate communications and information.

Each country has its own context for the emergence of one or another type of communication regime, and it is possible to understand this regime only in the context of each specific country. As a result, it is impossible to offer an ideal model of controllability of communication regimes for all types of societies and states. At the same time, it is possible to describe a typical model for managing communication regimes, regularities, organizational logic, resources, tools, and management technologies. The proposed analytical matrix allows distinguishing the main types of management of communication regimes (based on the parameters of location and the degree of conventionality of the control center) and determining the degree of controllability of communication regimes for these types (based on the achievement of the main indicators of controllability).

References

1. Ackoff R., Emery F. About purposeful systems. Translated from English. Ed. by I.A. Ushakov; translated by R.G. Rubalsky. Moscow: Soviet Radio. 1974 (Translation from English).
2. Anokhin P.K. Philosophical aspects of the theory of the functional system: Selected Works. Moscow: Nauka. 1978. (In Russian).
3. Begalinova K.K., Gribin N.P., Komleva V.V., Kotiukova T.V., Nazarov R.R., Ospanova A.N., Panov V.S., Smolik N.G., Turgunbaeva A.S., Cheremenina E.G. Communication regimes in Central Asia: a scientific discussion. *Russia and the World: Scientific Dialogue*. 2021; 1(2): 96-137. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.53658/RW2021-1-2-96-137>. (In Russian)

¹ Begalinova K.K., Gribin N.P., Komleva V.V., Kotiukova T.V., Nazarov R.R., Ospanova A.N., Panov V.S., Smolik N.G., Turgunbaeva A.S., Cheremenina E.G. Communication regimes in Central Asia: scientific discussion, *Russia and the World: Scientific Dialogue*. 2021; 1(2): 96-137. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.53658/RW2021-1-2-96-137>. (In Russian). Volkov V.V., Vorotnikov V.V., Komleva V.V., Starikov A.D. The Communication Regimes of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia: A Scientific Discussion. *Russia and the world: a scientific dialogue*. 2021; 1 (2):138-161. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.53658/RW2021-1-2-138-161>. (In Russian).

4. Gasumyanov V.I., Komleva V.V. Communication modes as a factor of intercountry interactions: statement of the problem. *International life*, 2020; 10: 38-49. (In Russian)
5. Gasumyanov V.I., Komleva V.V. Communication modes as a new scientific category. *Communicology*, 2020; Vol. 8, No. 3:43-50. (In Russian).
6. Komleva V.V. Communication modes of the countries of «catching up revolutions»: people as beneficiaries. *International Life*, 2020; 3, March:130-133. (In Russian).
7. Komleva V.V. Country communication mode as a socio-political phenomenon. *Russia and the World: Scientific Dialogue*, 2021; Vol. 1, No. 1:13-26. (In Russian).
8. Prigozhin A.I. Manageability. *Encyclopedic Sociological Dictionary*. Moscow: ISPI RAS Publishing House. 1995. (In Russian).
9. Rubtsova M.V. Sociological theory of manageability. St. Petersburg: OOO «Knizhny Dom». 2010. (In Russian).
10. Safranchuk I.A., Lukyanov F.A. Modern world order: actors' adaptation to structural realities. *Polis. Political Studies*. 2021; 4:14-25. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.17976/jpps/2021.04.03>. (In Russian).
11. Tarando E.E. Review of the Monograph by M.V. Rubtsova «Sociological Theory of Governability». St. Petersburg: LLC «Knizhny Dom». *Vestnik (Herald) of Saint-Petersburg University*. 2011; Series 12, Vol. 3:359-360. (In Russian).
12. Tikhonov A.V. The Sociology of management. Moscow: Kanon+ ROOI Rehabilitation. 2007
13. Vasilkova V.V. Order and chaos in the development of social systems: synergetics and the theory of social self-organization. St. Petersburg: Lan'. 1999. (In Russian).
14. Volkov V.V., Vorotnikov V.V., Komleva V.V., Starikov A.D. The Communication modes of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia: A scientific discussion. *Russia and the world: a scientific dialogue*. 2021; 1 (2): 138-161. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.53658/RW2021-1-2-138-161>. (In Russian).
15. Von Bertalanffy L. General systems theory: a critical review. *Studies on the General Theory of Systems: A Collection of Translations*. Moscow: Progress, 1969:23-82. (Translation from English).

About the author

Valentina V. KOMLEVA. DSc (Soc.). Deputy Director for scientific work at the National Research Institute of Communication Development; Head of the Department of Foreign Regional Studies and International Cooperation, Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of Russian Federation. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5376-0984>. Address: 22, building 1, Korobeynikov Lane, Moscow, 119034, Russian Federation, komleva@nicrus.ru.

Contribution of the author

The author declares no conflicts of interests.

Article info

Submitted: April 5, 2022. Approved after peer reviewing: April 8, 2022. Accepted for publication: April 15, 2022. Published: August 11, 2022.

The author has read and approved the final manuscript.

Peer review info

«Russia & World: Scientific Dialogue» thanks the anonymous reviewer(s) for their contribution to the peer review of this work.