

## Урбаністичні медіапрактики: європейський та український досвід

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У науковій розвідці досліджено світові теоретичні та практичні підходи до розвитку урбаністичної журналістики та розглянуто практичні аспекти функціонування цього напрямку в медіагалузі. Унаочнено практичний досвід західних колег стосовно створення урбаністичного контенту, проаналізовано приклади успішної реалізації локальних та гіперлокальних проєктів, які мають на меті як виробництво якісного інформаційного продукту, так і вирішення важливих соціальних проблем місцевих спільнот. Зазначено, що сьогодні урбаністична журналістика перетворилася на світовий тренд. Висвітлення проблем формування та функціонування міського простору набуває все більшої популярності, а це, у свою чергу, спонукає медіафахівців до створення унікальних проєктів, як-от проєкт «Міста». Європейський досвід продукування урбаністичного контенту на різних медійних платформах є корисним для української журналістики. Українські урбаністичні ресурси, як і європейські, переважно функціонують в онлайн-просторі, що зумовлено рядом економічних та технологічних факторів. Відзначено, що сучасні комунікаційні технології збагачують сприйняття урбаністичного дискурсу. Міські веб-сайти виконують функцію «мінімізації» офіційного порядку денного, виступають певними «дослідниками» міста та «путівниками» у різних сферах міського життя. У роботі представлено тематичний спектр сайтів «Міста», «Хмарочос», We Love Brussels, The Village Україна, колективного блогу «Приватна урбаністика» (журнал «Український тиждень»), проаналізовано стратегії контентотворення. Звернено увагу на тематичну варіативність сайтів, що відбиває різноаспектність міського життя. Медіаосвоєння міста зреалізовано в урбаністичній ініціативі видання «Український тиждень». Блог «Приватна урбаністика» містить переважно аматорські матеріали, у яких відбито авторські рефлексії з приводу життя в мегаполісах і периферійних містах. Такі журналістські проєкти сприяють створенню урбаністичного дискурсу та формуванню на його засадах міської ідентичності.

**Ключові слова:** гіперлокальна журналістика; локальна журналістика; урбаністична журналістика; урбаністична комунікація, міська ідентичність.

### 1. Introduction

**Problem statement.** The relevance of the topic can be explained by the need to reflect some of the recent changes that have taken place in Ukrainian cities under the influence of different political, historical, social and cultural aspects. The subject field of urban science combines research in the fields of sociology, demography, economics, geography, philosophy, psychology, history and cultural studies. Mass media play an important role in this process, which in the classical sense is the role of mediators between the authorities and the local people.

Media effects of urbanism contribute to the interaction between the authorities and the citizens. It becomes evident that contemporary style and rhythm of the life of the citizens need some changes: wise and effective economic, administrative and cultural decisions for a comfortable social life in all senses. Urban forms not only represent the social

order but generate them on the basis of social and cultural norms, building cultural identity of the citizens, blurring social differences and developing the vast array of individual and collective relationships, perceptions, beliefs and practices of city dwellers.

Relevant to the concept of urban journalism is the term of hyperlocal journalism, which reflects not only the geographical level of the event, but its uniqueness, demonstrates a better approach to its presentation and includes deeper studies of the topic.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** In recent years, scholars from all over the world have been interested in the phenomena of urbanism and urban journalism as an important tool of social cohesion building. The attention of scientists is focused on the problem of the definition of hyperlocal journalism, on the analysis of changes that happened in the information landscape and caused the decline of traditional media and the emergence of alternative

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ones; identification of the prospects for the development of local and hyperlocal media; study of structural changes in the media of different countries; problems of quality information.

On the theoretical level these problems were investigated by D. Lucka, A. Leupold, U. Klinger, O. Jarren, L. Kampf, J. Hujanen, K. Lehtisaari, C. Lindén, M. Grönlund, C. Tenor, K. Hess and L. Waller. Daria Lucka, a scholar from Poland, focuses on the aspects of new urbanism, which reinforces the processes of building and uniting communities through the organization of events [1]. Anna Leupold, Ulrike Klinger and Otfried Jarren notice significant changes in the local journalistic environment and note that both media and social spheres have faced some “disruptions and discontinuities” recently [2]. Researchers describe modern city journalism as a “challenging” activity, which can be characterized by “dwindling readership, media concentration and economic crisis” [2, p. 960]. These processes are reinforced by the crisis in the European social cohesion sphere, which is currently dealing with “social fragmentation, gentrification and the increasing inflow of migrants” [2, p. 961]. The authors see the problem even further, pointing out that under these circumstances the identity of the local communities suffers a lot in the process of mediatization: “the concepts are interrelated, as perceptions of belonging, identity, or community are heavily mediatized: local media provide the informational backbone of what people know about social life in their city” [2, p. 979]. Regarding cohesion as a multidimensional concept” and having carried out the content analysis of seven local newspapers in three German cities, the scientists come to the conclusion that there is no difference in the reporting style of social cohesion across cities, but there is a “wide variation across newspaper types,” which means that the image of the local communities of the readers can be different depending on whether it is a local newspaper, a weekly advertiser or a tabloid [2, p. 961]. German scholar Leif Kramp studies journalism in metropolitan areas of Europe and the opportunities, which journalists can take, dealing with urban issues. Researcher proves that development of innovative storytelling formats, the reporting style that can easily be appropriated by local journalists, can help the media to “strengthen the core functions of local journalism to create social cohesion and encourage civic participation” [3, p. 177]. The author fully describes the specifics of modern city life with all its “disruptions” and stresses that stand on the way and prevent full communication between people, clearly defining some more reasons, which have caused social conflicts in European cities: “rising rents and housing prices,” “environmental concern,” “economic change,” “introduction of digital technologies to public administration” and “infrastructure and social control (surveillance)” [3, p. 177]. Kramp not only regards radical changes in the lifestyle of European citizens “in the era of deep mediatization,” but also talks about “shortcomings of local journalism in attempt to keep this transformation pace” [3, p. 178].

Swedish and Finnish scholars J. Hujanen, K. Lehtisaari, C. Lindén and M. Grönlund have made a major contribution to the development of research around new hyperlocal

media and communication technologies that have just emerged in the world and have not yet received enough attention from researchers, because of the transformation of the journalistic industry itself. Scholars point out that in recent years, there has been a shift in the research interests toward exploring hyperlocal initiatives, such as community outlets or community-based news startups. The authors define hyperlocal media as those that can be characterized by activities within clear geographical boundaries and have original content targeted at local communities. They also note that despite the popular belief that hyperlocal media is run largely online, some of them already have their successful printed versions [4]. Citing Brian McNair, the researchers highlight four key functions that hyperlocal media perform for their local communities: 1) serve as a source of information; 2) work as watchdogs; 3) act as mediators between different groups of citizens; 4) uphold certain political and social decisions relevant to the community [4]. Researcher C. Tenor at Karlstad University (Sweden) explores the role of hyperlocal news in the lives of local communities. The author is also trying to find out how entrepreneurs involved in hyperlocal projects see the role of accountable journalism, building her research on the criteria for their attitude to business and journalism. The latter is considered by the author as a non-profit activity, as well as a commercial and profitable one [5].

Researchers K. Hess and L. Waller also note the increasing attention of scientists to hyperlocal media and consider the development of this direction through the lens of the theory of “digital disruptions” [6]. Scholars point out that, unlike the traditional media, which are currently experiencing both a financial crisis and a crisis of distrust of the audience, and are reducing their editions, hyperlocal projects are growing in number in different parts of the world. These startups are attractive in terms of simple and streamlined information sharing process between journalists and community members [6].

World media practitioners believe that journalism today should be closer to people, not even at local, but at hyperlocal level. Sophie Casals, journalist at the hyperlocal French newspaper Nice-Matin explains the idea that journalists should take into account, what exactly would be interesting to the audience, which aspects and social issues are important and what they would like to receive in the news: “Maybe we — the local or hyperlocal journalists — focus too much on whether the story we’re dealing with is local or hyperlocal. But being close to our readers does not only mean being close to their physical location, but also to their interests. We need to understand better what their needs concerning news are, other than just local proximity” [7]. Nevertheless, Henning Bulka, Audience Engagement Editor at the Rheinische Post in Germany warns that it is not necessary “to follow the audience,” since the choice of a topic is still the prerogative of the media specialists: “Journalists should always work in the name of their audience. Hyperlocal journalism should focus on that even harder, maybe ask for story assignments and discuss very openly about what they write and say. However, this should not mean that readers can rule over those journalists. If you

report on something you know is wrong, you shouldn't let yourself be easily convinced that it's right, even if the loudest shouters are your key audience. That might then be the real story" [7]. Estimating the future of hyperlocal journalism and the direction in which it may go, the expert points out that there are two crucial things that can lead to success and they are participatory models, "giving people a voice" and the ability to "find a sustainable business model" [7].

Famous world expert Demian Radcliffe, Honorary Research Fellow at the Cardiff School of Journalism, Culture and Media Studies, assigns to hyperlocal media the role of "filling the information gaps that have formed in local communities", claiming them to be the place where the locals can express their own opinion [8]. Radcliffe believes that the key to successful launch of the hyperlocal project is encouraging local residents to be actively engaged, clearly identify the audience and the type of message the publication brings to it, analyze the competitive environment and focus on production of a "new, fresh and original product" [8]. Experts rely on new media, such as social networks, blogs, and more, to develop this direction.

Peter Fromm Jacobsen, a lecturer at UPDATE Danish School of Media and Journalism, emphasizes the "benefits" of hyperlocal media [9], because, unlike national ones, they do not "lose relevance" but, on the contrary, "focus on small communities and, as they narrow their audience, they become closer to the reader" [9]. The formation and prospects of development of hyperlocal media, which are conditioned by powerful transformation processes, are also in the research focus of Ukrainian scholars and practitioners. Thus, features of hyperlocal media content are considered in the work "Hyperlocal Media: Prospects for Ukraine" written by Yu. M. Nesteryak. The author relies on the following definition: "hyperlocal media are online media whose content is related to what happens within a few small geographical areas and is distributed within these territories to their residents" [10]. Exploring the role of hyperlocal media in the public life of the townspeople, Yu. M. Nesteryak distinguishes two main functions that they perform (informational and emotional one): "Informational function is about providing information needs (what happens, where and when), and emotional one is empowering citizens to belong to one (local) community" [10]. Ukrainian scholar R. Verbovy confirms the opinion that hyperlocal media has become extremely popular today: "The trend of hyperlocality is one of the most popular in the field of new media. Hyperlocal media, which are rarely called "microlocal" or "sublocal," cover events and issues that are of interest to a quantitatively insignificant audience (territorial communities, residents of small towns, public centers, etc.). The professional interests of such media are aimed at producing news that is often ignored by the national media" [11]. In the author's point of view, the growing popularity of hyperlocal publications is caused by the low cost of production and publication of content [11]. A. Rudchenko, considers journalism as one of the important aspects of the urban environment formation and pays special attention to the role of blogging in shaping urban space. According to the author, blogs are one of the most direct forms of interaction

between the media and the society, which explains their relevance and popularity [12]. O. Herman emphasizes the effectiveness of European practice in the development of hyperlocal media and draws attention to the need for its further development [13]. Ukrainian scholar M. Butyryna in the article "Journalism as a Synergetic Object" emphasizes the fact that hyperlocal media are the most common forms of partisanship when "the audience participates in the initiation and full production of content" [14, p. 17].

As we can see, knowledge of hyperlocal media gives a new impetus to the scientific study of urban journalism, as this format provides a detailed description of the urban space with a high level of audience involvement and feedback.

**Purpose of the paper.** The purpose of the article is to study the world urban journalism tendencies and practices and their role in the development of new formats of journalism products; investigate the opportunity of their adaptation to Ukrainian realities and analyze hyperlocal, urban-oriented media.

**Research object.** The object of the study is represented by the materials and publications of such Ukrainian hyperlocal resources as "Skyscraper", *The Village Ukraine* and the "Private Urban Studies" project ("*Ukrainian Week*" magazine), which have an urban orientation.

**Research methods.** In the process of study general scientific methods of comparison, synthesis, analysis and induction were used. With the help of comparison, it became possible to understand the difference between world urban journalism practice and Ukrainian one, as well as estimate the peculiarities of editorial approaches to development of new journalism formats, and their potential in the context of audience engagement. Synthesis method, which involves combination of the main theses on the basis of common thematic orientation helped to outline the main themes and problems presented in the articles of Ukrainian and British web-sites. With the help of analysis method, the main features and concepts of the editorial policy of the urban projects were investigated and the problematic field of the publications was outlined. The method of induction was used to analyze subjective statements of the blog authors, their single experience that was extended to the general practice of perceiving the image of certain cities by the reader. We also used a descriptive method to depict how Ukrainian cities are presented in the materials of the Ukrainian Week website and the method of content monitoring with the aim to develop the array of journalism articles and find out additional information about the authors.

## 2. Results

Nowadays, urban journalism has become a global trend, attracting the interest of journalists from all over the world. Under such circumstances, attention to urban-themed formats is growing rapidly, which is revealed in the emergence of several various city projects in the media. For example, in the year 2014 famous British quality newspaper *The Guardian* launched a new urban journalism website, called "Guardian Cities" ([theguardian.com/cities](http://theguardian.com/cities)), which was highly spoken about in the English-speaking countries and became extremely popular among the readers at once [15].

The aim of the project was to discuss urban life and the future of different community groups around the world. The emphasis in the materials of the “Guardian Cities” was made on reported journalism, they included “thoughts” and “voices” of people worldwide, which were presented in the form of the news, reportages, infographics, photo galleries, videos, etc. [15]. In one of the interviews, the editor of the “Cities”, Chris Michael, called the project a “new type of journalism” and said that their team used an “innovative approach” to writing materials, and the coverage was not only from big cities, but also from the most unknown corners of the world, where public attention is needed [15]. The idea of the “Cities” website was that it offered something different in editorial terms than the political races and processions of fatalities that typically characterize the news agenda [15].

In the context of the audience the project was aimed at both core *The Guardian* readers, who “think forward” and are interested in future changes and developments, and city enthusiasts, whose numbers are difficult to identify: “At the same time there’s a very specific audience whose numbers are hard to identify but which we can estimate based on social media, and on shares of particular pieces, and on our audience data analysis. There’s a particular European and a particular American readership, for example, so that’s a bit more targeted. Then there’s the kind of urbanist crowd you mention, so architects, urban planners, academics, students, cyclists, gentrification activists and all the people who take a specific interest in how cities are changing. That number is increasing over time. I don’t think these audiences are mutually exclusive. You can absolutely do stories that would be of interest for both of them, and that’s our role in a way” [15].

The emphasis in the “Cities” materials was made on the social, meaningful and flashy topics that were an example of “community journalism,” “local journalism” and “hyperlocal journalism,” which not only inform, but also address to specific social problems of small groups. For example, The Guardian announced the Asian-friendly “Jakarta Post” project, edited by Evi Mariani, master in urban studies at the University of Amsterdam, whose project focuses on the local issues [16]. The problem was that thousands of residents of Jakarta had been living in the area, which the authorities called “slums,” for decades. People lived in the houses built with their own hands, deprived of access to modern conveniences, such as electricity and running water, and made a living by fishing, trade and services, such as hair cutting. But in one night the bulldozers demolished those subtle settlements and crushed the outskirts, as it was planned to build a hotel complex, that would look like a mythical eagle from space there [16]. The editor claimed that the most important thing about this process was to make sure that the idea, presented in the articles was not only a problem, but also a story: “They key thing is that pitches should be for stories and not just issues” [15].

However, there were some topics that to Chris Michael’s mind didn’t qualify with the policy of the “Cities”. Firstly, those were the themes that didn’t fit “within the context of The Guardian as a newspaper;” secondly, the editorial board tried “to avoid cultural developments per se,” that is in its

pure form, and, finally, trivial or common themes, or “the kind of things that maybe the travel sites would already cover” also don’t correspond to requirements [15].

One of the latest popular topics for discussion in the “Cities” was the theme of “divided cities.” The documentary series “Divided Cities” by *The Guardian*, presented on the site in the form of video posts, updated the experience of the most current urban delineations, which related not only to the territory, but also to social connections and told the stories of five cities – Nicosia, Melilla, Havana, Memphis and Delhi reflecting the divisions caused by globalization [17]. According to Chris Michael, the task of the group was to move away from popular political news about Trump and Brexit and show that there were more important topics that were not given much attention, and to explore urban separation in a new way: “Thirty years from the fall of the Berlin Wall, new global tensions are polarising our world – and our cities feel more divided than ever. ... When the Berlin Wall fell, there were two border walls in Europe; now there are 15. Nor is this fracture merely physical: many cities are havens of wealth and privilege for those who hold the access codes, hives of struggle and poverty for those who do not. Wherever I travel to report I have always been struck by how different people can have such contrasting experiences of the same city” [17].

As a matter of fact, the focus of the materials of the “Cities” is on the social flashy topics that are typical of community journalism, local journalism and hyperlocal journalism, which not only inform but also address specific social problems of small groups. All this confirms the effectiveness of urban journalistic practices of community journalism in the development of important social topics.

Another striking example of urban journalism is a website dedicated to the city of Brussels, under the eloquent title “We Love Brussels” ([welovebrussels.org](http://welovebrussels.org)), which contains the following sections: “Urban Life and Trends,” “Event Diary,” “City Guide,” “Creativity & Ideas,” “Global Affairs,” “Community.” The resource positions itself as a digital platform focused on illumination of the city life, its culture, creativity, events, amazing places, the lifestyle of the townspeople, the tendencies of the city’s development. The content of the site consists of posts, reports, information materials and blogs on various urban topics.

The journalists at “We Love Brussels” give an idea of the city under different views, through the prism of different identities: both own and acquired, which allows to delve deeper into the problem and see what is left without attention of ordinary people. The identity of some authors is emphasized: “Indonesian living in Brussels”, “Italian girl and Erasmus Mundus part-time student”, and sometimes even professional identity is stressed out: “urologist by profession but journalist by vocation” [18].

Experts at “We Love Brussels” consider that it is important to share content related to contemporary social and economic issues facing cities in the 21st century, to identify the peculiarities of urban materials and to demonstrate the role of a modern urban journalist by creating innovative and urgent stories, as this gives impetus to the development of journalism and the city itself. We Love

Brussels is eager to give a word to local bloggers, digital activists, and all citizens seeking to share their stories about the city. At the same time, the authors of the resource explore issues of citizen journalism, press freedom, big data, digital narratives and urban investigative journalism.

The content of "We Love Brussels" consists of posts, reports, information materials and blogs on various urban topics. The articles of the website are the result of cooperation, a spiritual and intellectual foundation for a fundamentally new format of interaction between journalists and consumers of information.

Under the conditions of transformation of the Ukrainian media system, the experience of development and functioning of European hyperlocal publications is extremely important. The formation process of hyperlocal media system in Ukraine was initiated by the Hyperlocal Community Media School. A series of trainings and webinars that took place during the years 2015–2017 were held on the issues of creation of hyperlocal resources (*materials of the fund "Union"*).

Unfortunately, Ukraine has not developed an extensive system of hyperlocal media yet, as decentralization processes are in their infancy and urban communities are just beginning to form. Problems of development of press freedom in territorial communities, establishment of the dialogue between the authorities and the people, increase in activity of public associations, initiation of activity of local bloggers, creation and production of unique urban content are realized in projects like "Voices of Communities".

Attempts to create a profitable hyperlocal project and bring it to viability in terms of new conditions were made in the year 2014 by the public organization "Airship", which launched a community hub project in Yampil, Vinnytsia region, to motivate local residents to change the environment of the provincial town. The plans of the organization were to further transform private and communal media of small towns into modern online media. However, the project was frozen due to lack of funds. Subsequently, a number of online media were created on the platform for The City websites in small towns, such as Kremenets City, Kalush City, Petropavlovka City, Starkon City, Bilyaivka City, Mltpl City, Lyman City, ShostkaNews.City, Nikopol.City, etc.

Nowadays, there is still very little to talk about the steadiness of forms and the extensive system of hyperlocal media that are intended to produce unique urban content and initiate the activity of local bloggers, to establish a dialogue between the authorities and the people. The absence of established forms of hyperlocal media in Ukraine indicates a period of formation in which transitional forms are requested. Today, there is a number of stand-alone urban online media that position themselves as hyperlocal resources. Among them there are Kiev city magazine "Skyscraper", The Village Ukraine and the "Private Urbanism" collective blog, functioning on the website of the "Ukrainian Week" magazine.

"Skyscraper" and "The Village Ukraine" are urban-oriented media whose practice attests to the effectiveness of hyperlocal forms for urban development as they describe the city through the "big-to-small" principle. The face of the modern Ukrainian

city emerges through the detailed description of its life, events, people's history, which is reflected in the visual and thematic structuring of the content based on geographical links. Also, these editions have their own communities on social networks.

Kyiv City Magazine "Skyscraper" positions itself as a resource that provides "fresh news and interesting articles about events in Kyiv and city development" and has the slogan "Understanding the City" (hmarochos.kiev.ua) The official website of the magazine has an extensive structure and consists of the following headings: "News," "Environment," "City policy," "Socium," "Economy," "Interactive" and "#Nechos." The thematic scale of the content presented on the website contributes to the widening of the readership. Architecture, city improvement, history and modern days of Kyiv city districts, revitalization of living space, municipal, communal, transport, legislative, political, ethnic, social, environmental problems, reforms, comfort of life in a big city - such thematic variability makes it possible to get acquainted with various problems. In order to increase the communicative efficiency of the resource, active forms of interaction with the audience were applied. Thus, in the section "Interactive" under the heading "Spend your free time with benefit" tests for knowledge of the architecture of Kiev and other Ukrainian cities are offered.

The "Skyscraper" resource has three special promotional projects with such brands as Ecobum (Green Business in the City), Lucky Land (Buyer's Checklist) (which tells you how to choose a new home and make no mistake) and "Park Lake City", which is a testimony to the self-sustainability of the project and the use of commercial storytelling tools.

Modern communication technologies enrich the perception of urban discourse, and digital narratives are an effective way to convey a message to the audience. On the website of "The Village Ukraine" the digitized country is transformed into M. McLuhan's "global village", and every reader, regardless of their place of residence, can get acquainted with the life of any Ukrainian city. The Village Ukraine website includes such sections as "News," "City," "Business," "Food," "Style," "Culturem," "Knowledge," "Kids," and "Kyiv as Antistress." These sections have such subheadings as "Photo Report," "Eco," "Special Project," "Travels," "People in the City," "Surveillance Camera," "There are Questions" and "Situation." The variability of perception of the urban environment, valuable social, moral and ethical characteristics of the people are reflected in the "People in the city" section.

The focus of urban websites is to cover urban life, local lifestyles, cultural, political, economic events, ecology, health and sports. The city is the only organism where these spheres are interconnected, where creation of comfortable living conditions is the task of urban science, and comprehensive information and creation of common communication platforms to discuss and formulate the agenda is the task of the media.

Media development of the city, reflected in the practice of the Ukrainian Week national edition and implemented in the "Private Urban Studies" project, seems to be quite interesting. The authors of the project claim that the city cannot be detached from the country. The uniqueness of the project is in its attempt to create a multifaceted image of Ukraine through the unified images of the cities that are not similar to each other, with their specific features and characteristics, to unite the country that is

currently divided by the territorial, national and even demographic characteristics. Personalized stories of cities appear as a local manifestation of the common features of urban living.

The articles about Ukrainian cities are presented on the website in the form of a collective blog, and for convenience of navigation, there is a map of Ukraine with cities on the main page: when clicking on the geotag above the city, a post opens. Different Ukrainian cities are presented in the blog with the articles written by both amateur and professional journalists who were born or lived there and now share their memories or views on the city. The authors of texts that traditionally begin with the words "I have lived in this city for about..." tell about "their own city," which is associated with memories, landmarks, remarkable historical and cultural events that influenced both the city development and the personality formation of the author, their identification with a particular territory. Cultural diachronism is realized in descriptions of urban landscapes, where the codes of different periods, such as Soviet and post-Soviet ones, coexist organically. The storytelling format allows to inform readers softly and affect them emotionally, building strong images of the cities with the help of symbols and signs.

Such cultural diachronism can be seen on the examples of publications, dedicated to the city of Kyiv. Firstly, the capital has always been a multicultural place and this diversity is revealed in the variety of its cultural traditions, and secondly, it is a patchwork of social connections. Kiev is a dynamic city, where the lifestyle is even more fleeting than in other Ukrainian towns and this can be reflected in various things - from architectural dissonance to the clothing style of the locals. For example, Kateryna Novikova in the article "Kyiv. The Path to Your City" emphasizes these diachronic observations, as well as personalizes and outlines her urban reflections that help to find her own identity: "The city is like a river that cannot be entered twice. The city lives, changes, dresses in the style of different epochs, becomes beautiful or distorted due to the chaotic development. Some out of its new "clothes" fits the look of the city, and some don't. More and more, I hear that Kiev is no longer the one it used to be and that it has lost its character... Let it be, but there is always a way through a gate in the heart to the city of your childhood, to your own city (Kyiv. The Way to Your City. *Ukrainian Week*. 2016. 01 Desember).

The geography of the texts is wide – from Lviv to Luhansk. Historical urbanism is represented through the past and present in both large and small cities: Kyiv (Falling in Love with Kiev: Three Rules of the Guide to the Hat. *Ukrainian Week*. 2017. 23 March ), Sumy (Sumy. City of Opportunities. *Ukrainian Week*. 2016. 17 November), Vinnytsia ( Through Keletskaya on the Sixth Tram. *Ukrainian Week*. 2018. 23 October), Drohobych (Drohobych. My Incredible India. *Ukrainian Week*. 2019. 04 April), Boryslav (Boryslav. A Deep Sleep of an Industrial Town. *Ukrainian Week*. 2017. 03 October), Lviv (The History of Love. *Ukrainian Week*. 2016. 24 October), Simferopol ( Simferopol. City Distancing. *Ukrainian Week*. 2018. 30 November), Pavlograd (Pavlograd. Fear and hatred in Pavlegas. *Ukrainian Week*. 2018. 30 July) and others. To date, all regional centers have already been outlined, with peripheral cities remaining scarcely covered. However, journalists at Private Urbanism blog have already begun to capture them: Dubrovytsya (Dubrovytsia. From

Prince's Capital to Amber one. *Ukrainian Week*. 2018. 16 February), Berehove (Berehove and Khust. Hungarian. Jewish. French. *Ukrainian Week*. 2016. 11 November), Novovolynsk (Specificity of Typicality. *Ukrainian Week*. 2016. 08 September), Kosiv (Kosiv – Palimpsest of Legends. *Ukrainian Week*. 2016. 06 October), Vilkove (Vilkove. Eastern Region of Central Europe. *Ukrainian Week*. 2016. 06 Desember), Vladimir-Volynsky (Volodymyr-Volynsky of my Street. *Ukrainian Week*. 2018. 19 November).

Within this approach, the reader can compare the uniqueness of urbanization of the cities and towns. The variability of urban studies was influenced by the military events: traditional urban codes of the Ukrainian cities are militarized and associated with events occurring in eastern Ukraine. Thus, Maxim Vihrov, the author of the article "Luhansk: The city in the fields" describes the city in the centre of tragic events. The image of the city is revealed through the concepts of "war", "assault," "separatists," "lost home" and "Soviet architecture" (Luhansk: the city in the fields. *Ukrainian Week*. 2019. 06 May).

From one hand, the concept of Luhansk city is revealed through the sub-concepts of "war," "storm," "separatists," "lost home" and "soviet architecture." The author of the article, Maxim Vihrov, describes how the whole country was watching live by the drama that unfolded in the southern outskirts of the city in June 2014 with the invaders covering themselves with unarmed people, firing border guards from windows and roofs of high-rising buildings. Writing about his native city, the narrator hardly separates his personal emotions from the journalist's duty to be impersonal and objective, which is quite understandable, and he openly says about that: "When I write about Lugansk, it is difficult for me to separate urban reflections from personal memories, and all this together from reflections on war" (Luhansk: The city in the fields. *Ukrainian Week*. 2019. 06 May). His life was divided into pre-war and post-war. It turned out that those blocks of flats, damaged in the storm mentioned above, were located in the district where he lived in his childhood and built by his father in the late 1980s. So, the author knows well the history of that part of the city and the history of Luhansk in general. In his story the soviet image of the city is reinforced even by the names of the Streets (e. g. Soviet Street, etc.) and the fact that at the entrance to the central part of the city the visitors are invariably greeted by a monument to the Employee of Luhansk region, which ordinary people call the "man with a torch." Moreover, Vihrov claims that "the architectural face of the city was formed in the Soviet era, when the bosses of the Donbass coal clan had a solid lobby in Moscow and direct access to the General Secretary and so they put their "capitals" with claims of provincial chic" (Luhansk: the city in the fields. *Ukrainian Week*. 2019. 06 May). However, the writer admits that even in such a way Luhansk wasn't a depressive city, on the contrary, it was powerful and successful. Vihrov explains that some soviet names of the places in the city, which now sound strange within the decommunization law, didn't have such massive semantic load for the younger and even for the older generations of citizens: "However, for the youth, all this had no more than the ancient Turkic place names of our country: Aydar, Yevsug, Bakhmut, etc. No piety was felt to the Soviet ideological legacy. For example, a party place near the equestrian monument to Klimov Voroshilov was called among

the youth "by the horse" and the area of Heroes of the Great Patriotic War was called "Durakovka" even by the older generation. However, this should not be considered a manifestation of political protest either" (Luhansk: the city in the fields. *Ukrainian Week*. 2019. 06 May).

From the other hand, the author describes his native city with the most tender lyrics that goes from his heart, because he is writing about his young years. Even the title of the article ("The city in the fields") puts the emphasis on the sensitive aspect of the author's feelings towards Luhansk: "And the smell of apricot reminds of Luhansk. I do not know who decided that the adjacent areas should be planted with apricots, but every spring the whole neighborhood was submerged in the dizzying aromas of those "sakuras". Subsequently, the streets were strewn with apricot "snow", and in the summer - with the apricots themselves. No one but the children and especially jealous housewives considered these impious, always dusty apricots from a gastronomic point of view. Therefore, the pavements were covered with fragrant orange flesh during all the season ..." (Luhansk: the city in the fields. *Ukrainian Week*. 2019. 06 May). The intimation of urban discourse is enhanced by autobiographical reflections, marked by lyricism, touchiness and nostalgia for the city of childhood. The writer also has a strong feeling of national identity, regarding Luhansk as part of Ukraine and shows it in the article: "Poetess Lyubov Yakimchuk says that "where apricots do not grow, Russia begins." Believe her, because she is also from Luhansk region and knows what she is talking about" (Luhansk: the city in the fields. *Ukrainian Week*. 2019. 06 May).

The media development of the city continues: the authors of the "Private Urbanism" project focus on a specific aura of metropolitan and administrative centers, industrial, depressed and militarized cities, resorts, suburban areas. Private observations of the typicality and specificity of urban space, personal impressions, subjective analysis of the impact of socio-cultural changes on the spatial transformation of the urban environment summarize the authors' sensory experience and form the ability to read the urban text.

### 3. Discussion

The impact of transformation processes on the formation of urban space is open to debate. The definitions of local and hyperlocal content, the definition of urban content performance criteria, and the role of community media in its creation require scientific reflection and clarification. The problems of definition of the boundaries of the object of urban journalism, securing the process of transformation of urban journalism into service, relations between the media and the city are relevant now.

It is also important to clarify the role of blogs in the development of urban journalism, as blog posts on hyperlocal media websites form an opinion about the subjective perceptions of the local residents, outlining the range of municipal life issues that may provoke a conflict with the authorities.

The outlined problems indicate that urban journalism is a promising area for the future communicative research.

### 4. Conclusion

Urban journalism, urban communications, the specifics of coverage of urban issues by different types of media and their formats are all in the focus of research. Regarding hyperlocal media, which have been declared as an object of study, they currently represent the so-called scientific trend.

The practice of European hyperlocal media certifies that they are designed to fill the information gaps that have formed in local communities and to promote active interaction between the media and the people. The latter actualizes participatory practices as means of engaging the audience to create original content. Blogging practices, engagement of amateur journalists, and online communications are a must for a successful hyperlocal project.

Hyperlocal media operate mainly online.

Analysis of hyperlocal media has shown some changes in the European information landscape, where alternative media are beginning to dominate over traditional media, while hyperlocal Ukrainian media have signs of "transitivity." This is due to the lack of development of forms and the lack of an extensive system of hyperlocal media in Ukraine, which should produce unique urban content, initiate amateur journalists, activate blogging practices, establish communication between the authorities and the people.

Hyperlocal media prove their effectiveness in shaping urban space, acting as a platform for urban development planning, taking on the role of "researcher" and "guide" of the city. The practice of autonomous urban media, which have a geographical affinity, attests to the effectiveness of hyperlocal forms for urban development as they describe the city with the help of the "big-to-small" principle. Hyperlocal Internet media are self-sufficient, successful business projects funded by advertising, promotional materials, grants and sponsorship.

Media development of the city can be presented both at the hyperlocal and national levels, which is proved by the practice of the "Ukrainian Week" magazine.

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## Temchenko L. Urban media practices: European and Ukrainian experience

The article deals with the world theoretical and practical approaches to the development of urban journalism and examines the practical aspects of the functioning of this field in the media industry. The practical experience of Western colleagues in creation of urban content is identified, examples of successful implementation of local and hyperlocal journalistic projects aimed at producing a quality information product and solving important social problems of local communities are analyzed.

The relevance of the topic can be explained by the need to reflect some of the recent changes that have taken place in Ukrainian cities under the influence of different political, historical, social and cultural aspects. The subject field of urban science combines research in the fields of sociology, demography, economics, geography, philosophy, psychology, history and cultural studies. Mass media play an important role in this process, which in the classical sense is the role of mediators between the authorities and the local people.

In the process of study general scientific methods of comparison, synthesis, analysis and induction were used. With the help of comparison, it became possible to understand the difference between world urban journalism practice and Ukrainian one, as well as estimate the peculiarities of editorial approaches to development of new journalism formats, and their potential in the context of audience engagement. Synthesis method, which involves combination of the main theses on the basis of common thematic orientation helped to outline the main themes and problems presented in the articles of Ukrainian and British web-sites. With the help of analysis method, the main features and concepts of the editorial policy of the urban projects were investigated and the problematic field of the publications was outlined. The method of induction was used to analyze subjective statements of the blog authors, their single experience that was extended to the general practice of perceiving the image of certain cities by the reader. We also used a descriptive method to depict how Ukrainian cities are presented in the materials of the Ukrainian Week website and the method of content monitoring with the aim to develop the array of journalism articles and find out additional information about the authors.

Ukrainian urban resources, as well as European ones, predominantly operate online, due to economic and technological factors. It is noted that modern communication technologies enrich the perception of the urban discourse. City websites serve to "minimize" the official agenda and become "city researchers" and "guides" in various areas of urban life. The thematic spectrum of the "Cities" (The Guardian), "We Love Brussels," "Skyscraper," "The Village Ukraine" websites is presented in the work, the strategies of content creation are analyzed. Attention is drawn to the thematic variability of the websites, which reflects the diversity of urban life. The media development of the city was studied on the example of the "Ukrainian Week" magazine. The Private Urban Studies blog mainly contains amateur materials that present the authors' reflections on life in metropolitan and peripheral cities. Such journalistic projects contribute to the creation of urban discourse and the formation of urban identity.

**Keywords:** hyperlocal journalism; local journalism; urban journalism; social cohesion; urban communication; city identity.



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