

STRATEGIES FOR PROFESSIONALIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE CONDITIONS OF DIGITALIZATION

Olha Rudenko¹, Oleksandr Ignatenko², Yuliia Lykhach³, Ihor Khrebtiiy⁴, Roman Mishchenko⁵

¹D.Sc., Prof., Chernihiv Polytechnic National University, Chernihiv, Ukraine, Email address: olhamrudenko@gmail.com

²D.Sc., Assoc. Prof., State University of Information and Communication Technologies, Kyiv, Ukraine, Email address: apignat@ukr.net

³PhD, High School of Public Governance, Kyiv, Ukraine, Email address: y.lykhach@gmail.com

⁴PhD, High School of Public Governance, Kyiv, Ukraine, Email address: ikhrebtiiy1@gmail.com

⁵PhD, High School of Public Governance, Kyiv, Ukraine, Email address: 8573793@gmail.com

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Abstract

In the contemporary context of intensive digital transformation of public governance in Ukraine, the professionalization of the public service acquires strategic importance as a systemic process of adapting human capital to a reality in which most public functions, management processes, communications, and service delivery take place within a digital environment. The rapid implementation of the Diia platform, electronic registers, the Trembita system, HRMIS, artificial intelligence tools, and e-governance principles generates new competency requirements for public servants, while simultaneously creating risks of professional culture lagging behind the pace of technological development. However, the fragmentation of professional development programs, weak integration of digital competencies into HR processes, and insufficient linkage with performance evaluation point to the need for a comprehensive professionalization strategy. Such a strategy should ensure the sustainable adaptation of the public service to the challenges of the digital era, European integration, and post-war recovery. A cyclical professionalization strategy was developed, consisting of four interrelated blocks (changes in competency requirements, transformation of training methods, modernization of HR processes, and changes in work organization), as well as a target-state block with permanent feedback. Empirical analysis confirms a tangible shift in organizational culture toward innovation. The 2025 portfolio of professional development programs demonstrates systematic coverage of digital literacy, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and data-driven approaches; however, it also reveals fragmentation and the need for a unified development trajectory. The professionalization of the public service in the context of digitalization represents a fundamental transformation of its very essence – from a traditional bureaucratic model to a digitally oriented, data-driven, agile, and citizen-centric system. The proposed strategic framework provides a basis for transitioning from fragmented digital modernization to comprehensive strategic change management, which constitutes a strategic resource for national security, sustainable development, and Ukraine's European integration.

Keywords: *Public Administration, Crises, Risks, Conflicts, Digitalization, Public Service Institution, Public Servants, Professionalization, Strategizing, Reforms.*

JEL Codes: *H83, O33, K23, J45.*

Introduction

In the current conditions of global digital transformation, public administration is experiencing fundamental changes that significantly affect the content, forms and principles of public service functioning. The introduction of digitalization principles in Ukraine radically changes both the technical infrastructure, and the professional nature of state and municipal service. The professionalization of

public service, which was traditionally understood as increasing the level of competencies, ethical standards, organizational culture and efficiency of employees, in the digital era acquires a new meaning - it turns into a complex strategic process of systemic adaptation of the entire institutional system of public administration to reality, in which a significant part of public functions, management,

communications and service provision is implemented in the digital environment.

Literature review

The issue of the development of the public service institution in the context of modern challenges and reforms, the professionalization of public service is one of the central ones in the theory and practice of public administration, especially in the context of reform and adaptation to modern challenges. In the modern context (Mbandlwa Z. (2023), Mustanir A. et al. (2025)) professionalization is seen as a tool for improving the quality of services, overcoming corruption and ensuring resilience in conditions of socio-economic crises. International studies (Anderson R. et al. (2021); Jerab D. (2024)) point to the duality of digitalization, i.e.: on the one hand, it increases efficiency and transparency; on the other hand, it creates risks of algorithmic control, loss of professional autonomy, and conflicts.

Bochove M. & Oldenhof L. (2020) та Vitalaru B. (2024) analyzed current trends in institutional work in changing civil service organizations, examined the interaction between professionalization strategies, and explored ways to overcome professionalization problems through training. Boyes W. (2023) та Garcés C. V. (2023) revealed the features of professionalization, focused the attention on the problems, challenges, pressures and opportunities for the transformation of a state institution, and considered modern aspects of professionalization in the civil service.

Sandu D. (2021), Cheng H. et al. (2020) та Popelo O. et al. (2025) analyzed the professionalization of the civil service in the context of current trends and youth interest in the Romanian civil service, and conducted the empirical study based on the value of professionalization. Bergsgard N. A. & Nodland S. I. (2020), Cottin-Marx S. (2017) та Jakubek P. et al. (2023) considered the role of professionalization, standardization, and innovation among civil service providers, and studied public policies aimed at professionalization.

Despite the significant number of publications, most research focuses on individual aspects – training, digital competencies or personnel mechanisms. There is no

comprehensive systemic approach that integrates all blocks of professionalization (competences, training, personnel processes, work organization) into a single strategy taking into account the cyclicity and iterativeness of the process. In addition, insufficient attention is paid to the empirical analysis of changes in organizational culture and public servants' perception of their own role in the digital environment.

The purpose of the article is to develop conceptual principles and practical recommendations for the formation of the professionalization strategy of the public service in the digitalization context, which will ensure the systematic, sustainable and synchronized adaptation of institutions, processes and competencies to the requirements of digital governance.

Methodology

The following methods were used in the research: system analysis and generalization (when analyzing the results of the implementation of the “Diia” platform, electronic registers, the “Trembita” system, HRMIS, artificial intelligence tools and principles of e-government), regulatory and legal (when studying the institutional principles of regulating the processes of professionalization of the civil service and digitalization), dialectical (when putting forward a hypothesis regarding the feasibility of forming a strategy for professionalization of the civil service), statistical and comparative analysis (when analyzing the results of surveys and systematizing statistical material on financing the digitalization of the public sector, the budget structure of the digital transformation of Ukraine, comparative analysis with EU countries), abstract-logical (when systematizing programs for improving the skills of public servants in the field of developing digital competencies), graphical (when visualizing statistical data, developing a structured model of the strategy for professionalization of the public service in the context of digitalization).

Results

The current stage of the public administration development in Ukraine is characterized by intensive digital transformation, which is not only a technological, but also the

institutional and social challenge. The implementation of the “Diia” platform, the system of electronic state registers, interoperability mechanisms (Trembita), electronic document management, artificial intelligence tools and principles of electronic governance (e-governance) radically changes the content, forms and organization of public service. In these conditions, the effectiveness and legitimacy of the state largely depends on the ability of public servants to work in the digital environment, use data-driven approaches, ensure cybersecurity, counteract disinformation and comply with the principles of electronic governance.

Some scholars consider the professionalization of the public service in the martial law context as a strategic process of adaptation to extreme conditions, which requires increased professional training, depoliticization, and increased staff resilience, and also emphasize that the professionalization of the public service is not only an improvement in skills, but also the formation of a new organizational culture focused on national security and effective implementation of tasks in crisis conditions.

That is, the professionalization of the public service is turning into a systemic process of adapting the entire institutional architecture of public administration to reality, where a significant part of public functions, management processes, communications, and service provision is carried out in the digital dimension.

Scientists argue that the digital competence of public servants is the basis for the public

administration digitalization, since the rapid development of the IT sphere requires appropriate skills for the interaction of the state, business, and citizens, and the lack of these competencies hinders economic development, therefore professionalization should focus on digital skills as a key to successful transformation. Scientists prove that the digitalization of public administration methods makes interaction flexible and efficient, but requires updating the competencies of public servants (digital literacy, working with data).

That is, the insufficient level of digital competencies of public servants is no longer an individual problem - it is becoming a systemic obstacle to the implementation of the state policy of digital development, obligations on the Ukrainian-European integration, and the goals of sustainable post-war recovery.

Changes taking place in the public service system of Ukraine are accompanied by the transformation of the perceptions of public servants themselves about the essence, values, and content of their professional activities. An important indicator of these processes is the self-assessment of the professional characteristics of the public service, in particular the ratio of innovative and conservative attitudes. To record these perceptions in dynamics, the respondents' answers to questions about the characteristics of the majority of current public servants of Ukraine were analyzed (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question “How would you characterize the majority of existing public services in Ukraine?”, %

Survey year	Innovator		Conservative
	Agree to some extent with this characteristic	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree to some extent with this characteristic
2020	30.0	14.4	55.6
2021	29.7	12.4	57.9
2023	30.1	8,9	61,0
2025	45,8	1,8	52,4

**Source: National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service (2025a).*

The dynamics of the data in Table 1 is an empirical confirmation of the success of the professionalization of the public service in the digitalization context. If in 2020-2023 the inertia

of the conservative culture with a high level of uncertainty dominated, then in 2025 the qualitative change occurred, namely: almost half of the respondents (45.8%) see the majority of

public services as innovative, and the conservative perception is decreasing. This indicates that systemic measures for digital transformation (updating competencies, training methods, personnel processes and work organization) are not only formally implemented, but also change the subjective perception of organizational culture in the public service. The following shift is an important indicator of the transition to the target state - the professional, fast, transparent and data-driven public service focused on the citizen.

The growth of respondents who characterize most public services as “innovative” coincides with the period of intensive implementation of digital transformation priorities (2024-2025):

- full-scale deployment of HRMIS (over 90% of bodies connected by mid-2025) (HRMIS, 2026);
- mass implementation of Action. Education (Diia.Education, 2026) and mandatory testing of digital competencies (Digigram);
- integration of agile approaches, project management and data-driven solutions into daily work;
- resumption of competitions for positions with digital requirements and updating the classification of positions taking into account digital competencies.

It was these measures that led to the noticeable change in organizational culture; public servants began to perceive the system not as a conservative bureaucracy, but as an innovative structure capable of quickly adapting.

The digital transformation of public administration, which is being implemented in Ukraine through the "Diia" platform, the system of electronic state registers, electronic document flow mechanisms, and the principles of electronic governance (e-governance), is characterized by high rates of development and continuous expansion of functional capabilities. In these conditions, the insufficient level of digital competence of a public servant leads to his objective maladaptation to the new requirements of the professional activity, which actually turns it from a potential subject of reform into the significant barrier to their implementation.

Scientists note that in the digitalization context of education, professional training of

public servants should use electronic digital learning (distance platforms, simulators, gamification), since traditional methods do not meet the pace of change, and professionalization becomes a continuous process of forming digital technologies as a tool for increasing efficiency.

In the context of the intensive digital transformation of the public service of Ukraine, 2025 became a turning point in the development of advanced training programs for public servants in the digital competence development. In accordance with the List of approved advanced training programs for public servants under general professional (certificate) and short-term programs in 2025 by the National Agency for State Supervision of Public Administration and Public Service (National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service, 2025b), as well as taking into account the Action integration. The Education platform (Diia.Education, 2026) and the updated Digital Competence Framework (Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, 2025), educational activities aimed at developing key skills have been structured, namely: from basic digital literacy and cybersecurity to data-driven management, the use of e-governance electronic tools and adaptive learning in new technologies. Table 2 systematizes these programs, demonstrating their focus on increasing the digital maturity level of the public service, which is a necessary condition for the transition to the effective, transparent and model of public administration in the digitalization context.

The system of professional development of public servants demonstrates a systemic and large-scale institutional response to the challenges of digital transformation of the public service of Ukraine. In total, more than 70 programs have been recorded (a significant part of them from the Higher School of Public Administration, regional centers for advanced training, higher education institutions and private providers), covering almost all key aspects of digital competencies provided for by the Digital Competence Framework for Public Servants of Ukraine and the priority areas of the National Agency for the State Administration of Public Administration for 2025.

Digital literacy (digital literacy, digital accessibility, cyber hygiene) is a universal element of almost all programmes, mentioned as

key or mandatory in over 90% of cases. This confirms the transition from sporadic to mandatory requirement at all levels of the public service, which is in line with the goal of achieving a basic level of digital literacy (levels 1–2 according to the Framework) for practitioners and an intermediate level for managers.

About 60% of the programs are directly or indirectly devoted to the topics of cybersecurity,

personal data protection, countering disinformation, cyber fraud, critical infrastructure protection, and cyber hygiene. This reflects the priority of national security in the hybrid warfare and the growth of cyber threats (in particular, after the attacks of 2022-2025). The programs cover both basic (cyber hygiene, phishing) and advanced (DPIA, CSIRT, risk assessment, fact-checking).

Table 2. Systematization of training programs for public servants in the digital competence development, 2025

Direction of development of digital competencies	Content of programs	Typical program names (examples)	Key digital competencies
1. Basic digital literacy	Using digital tools, office programs, cloud services, working with information	“Digital literacy”, “Digital literacy of civil servants”, “Information technologies in the work of public servants”, “Cloud technologies and social networks”	digital literacy; working with information; using software; digital communication
2. Cybersecurity and information security	Protection of information, personal data, cyber hygiene, countering cyber threats and disinformation	“Cybersecurity”, “Information Security”, “Cyber Hygiene”, “Personal Data Protection”, “Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure Protection”	digital security; cyber hygiene; personal data protection; risk management
3. Artificial Intelligence and Analytical Digital Competencies	AI use in management processes, data analysis, decision automation	“Artificial Intelligence in Public Administration”, “Fundamentals of Artificial Intelligence for a Public Servant”, “Use of AI in Public Administration”	AI use; data analysis; digital thinking; support for management decisions
4. E-Government and Digital Democracy	E-services, electronic interaction with citizens, open data	“Electronic governance and electronic democracy”, “Electronic democracy”, “School of effective centers: from ASC to Action Center”	e-government; digital interaction; open data; digital public services
5. Digital transformation and strategic management	Change management, digital planning, strategic communications	“Digital Transformation of Public Administration”, “Strategic Management and Digital Planning”, “Strategic Communications in the Context of Digital Transformation”	digital change management; digital strategy; strategizing; leadership
6. Inclusive and ethical digitalization	Digital accessibility, gender sensitivity, ethical aspects of digital solutions	“Digital Accessibility in Public Service”, “Gender- Sensitive Digital Transformation of Public Administration”	digital accessibility; inclusivity; digital ethics

*Source: National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service (2025b).

Individual programs (over 10) focus on the AI use in public administration, data analysis, process optimization, and decision-making. This indicates a transition from “digital literacy” to digital thinking (digital mindset) and data-driven management, which is critical for implementing the principles of evidence-based policy and strategic planning in the digital economy.

Most programs combine technical digital skills with soft development competencies, namely: teamwork, communication, effective decision-making, and change perception, change management, inclusivity (gender-sensitive transformation, digital accessibility).

In accordance with the strategic priorities of the state, the List of programs for improving the

skills of public servants (National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service, 2025b) fully correlates with the Action Plan for the Development of the Professional Training System for Civil Servants (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2023), the Digital Transformation Strategy (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2025a), European integration plans (harmonization with GDPR, EU Digital Decade) and post-war reconstruction. Particular emphasis is placed on e-government, e-democracy, open data and strategic communications, demonstrating a focus on creating an effective, transparent and fast public service.

The analysis of financing of digital transformations of the public sector of Ukraine and comparison with EU practices is key to

assessing the resource provision for the development of civil servants' competencies, the formation of the digital culture and increasing the efficiency of management processes. This analysis will allow us to trace how public investments are directed both to technological modernization, and to personnel training, the development of innovative projects and electronic services, which directly affects the professionalization of the public service and its ability to effectively implement digital tools in public administration. Comparison with EU indicators will provide guidelines for scaling digital competencies, identifying resource gaps and the strategic priority of staff training (Table 3).

Table 3. Financing of digitalization of the public sector of Ukraine, billion euros

Indicator	2021	2023	2024	Change 2024–2023	Rate of change 2024/2023, %
Digitalization costs	0.0465	0.0628	0.0759	+0.0131	120.9
State budget in general	46.5	50.2	85.1	+34.9	169.5
Share of digitalization in the budget, %	0.10	0.13	0.09	−0.04	69.2
Nominal GDP	155.0	160.0	178.0	+18.0	111.3
Share of digitalization in GDP, %	0.030	0.039	0.043	+0.004	110.3
Number of civil servants, thousand people	400	410	415	+5	101.2
Costs per employee, €	116	153	183	+30	119.6

**Source: calculated by the authors, Ministry of Finance of Ukraine; Budget Committee of the Verkhovna Rada; European Union law; Ukraine to receive EUR 2.6 million for digitalization of services provided by Ministry of Digital Transformation.*

The indicators in Table 3 reflect the consistent increase in budgetary support for digital transformation against the background of faster growth in total government spending and nominal GDP. In absolute terms, spending on digitalization increased from EUR 0.0465 billion in 2021 to EUR 0.0759 billion in 2024, i.e. by EUR 0.0131 billion compared to 2023, which corresponds to a growth rate of 120.9%. At the same time, the total volume of the state budget increased much more intensively, reaching EUR 85.1 billion in 2024, which is EUR 34.9 billion higher than in 2023, as a result of which the share of digitalization in the budget, after increasing to 0.13% in 2023, slightly decreased to 0.09%, demonstrating a relative outstripping the growth of other areas of government spending. Comparison with macroeconomic dynamics indicates a gradual strengthening of the role of

digital investments in the structure of the economy, as their share in GDP increased from 0.030% in 2021 to 0.043% in 2024, and the increase in this indicator in 2024 compared to 2023 was 0.004 percentage points, which corresponds to the growth rate of 110.3%. Particularly indicative in the personnel policy are specific financing indicators, which demonstrate that spending on digitalization per civil servant in Ukraine increased from 116 to 183 euros, while in the EU it exceeded 10 thousand euros, which indicates a fundamentally different level of investment in digital workplaces, personnel training, analytical platforms and process automation. This asymmetry poses a structural challenge for the Ukrainian public service system, as limited resources make it difficult to mass-promote complex digital tools and require a focus on professionalization, developing universal

digital competencies, interdepartmental mobility of personnel, and creating multidisciplinary teams capable of working with data, cybersecurity, and digital services even in the environment of tight budget constraints. Taken together, the indicators in Table 3 indicate that digitalization in Ukraine in 2021–2024 was financed with increasing absolute resource provision, but in relative budgetary terms its position remained sensitive to the overall

dynamics of public finances, while in relation to GDP and per employee, there is a steady trend towards increasing the financial intensity of the digital transformation of the public sector.

The indicators in Table 4 demonstrate the gradual complication of the internal configuration of digitalization financing in 2021–2024 with a parallel increase in the total resource.

Table 4. Budget structure for Ukraine's digital transformation

Expense item	2021		2023		2024		Change 2024–2023	Rate of change 2024/23
	€ million	%	€ million	%	€ million	%	€ million	%
Innovations and IT projects	18.6	40.0	25.1	40.0	32.2	42.4	+7.1	128.3
Electronic governance	12.4	26.7	20.1	32.0	19.6	25.8	–0.5	97.5
Information systems and security	9.3	20.0	10.0	15.9	12.6	16.6	+2.6	126.0
Advanced training	3.1	6.7	3.8	6.1	4.6	6.1	+0.8	121.1
Other areas of digitalization	3.1	6.6	3.8	6.0	6.9	9.1	+3.1	181.6
Total	46.5	100.0	62.8	100.0	75.9	100.0	+13.1	120.9

**Source: calculated by the authors, Ministry of Finance of Ukraine; Budget Committee of the Verkhovna Rada; European Union law; Ukraine to receive EUR 2.6 million for digitalization of services provided by Ministry of Digital Transformation.*

In 2021, innovation and IT projects remained the dominant direction, accounting for EUR 18.6 million or 40.0% of total expenditures, while e-government accounted for 26.7%, information systems and cybersecurity - 20.0%, and training and other areas together did not exceed 13.3%. In 2023, the growth of the total

budget to EUR 62.8 million was accompanied by the increase in the role of e-government to 32.0% and the preservation of a significant share of innovative projects at 40.0%, which indicates the orientation of the policy towards scaling digital services for citizens while simultaneously supporting technological development (Fig. 1).

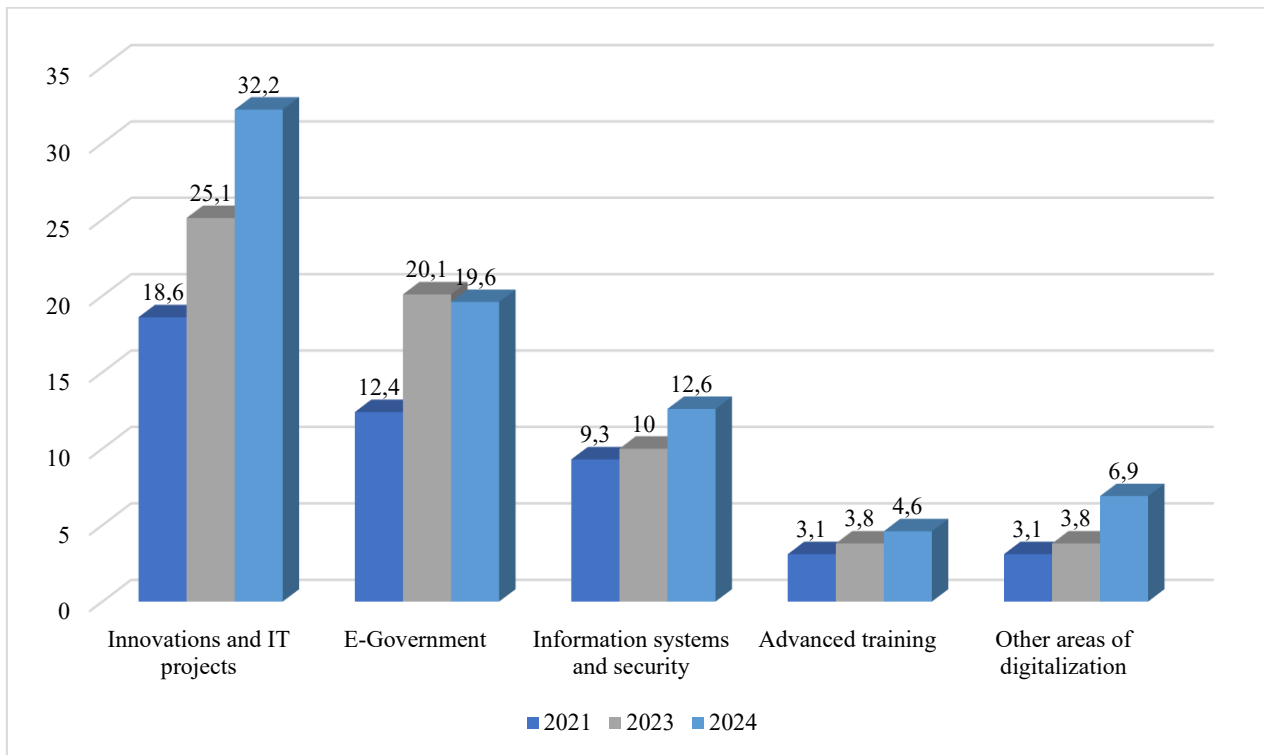


Figure 1. Digital Transformation Budget Structure 2022-2024, million euros

**Source: calculated by the authors.*

In 2024, with the increase in the total volume to EUR 75.9 million, there was a further redistribution of funds in favor of innovations and IT projects, the share of which increased to 42.4%, while the share of e-government decreased to 25.8%, which can be interpreted as the completion of the phase of intensive deployment of basic services and the transition to investments in more complex technological solutions and infrastructure modernization. The strengthening of funding for information systems and security to EUR 12.6 million with a share of 16.6% reflects the increased attention to the resilience of digital platforms in conditions of increased risks, while spending on advanced training remained relatively stable in the budget structure at around 6%, maintaining the role of a non-core, but systemically important area. A noticeable increase in the share of other areas to 9.1% in 2024 indicates the diversification of digital initiatives and the inclusion of new projects that expand the functional boundaries of the digital transformation of the public sector.

The indicators in Table 5 indicate a significant asymmetric scale of financing for digital transformation between Ukraine and the European Union, which, despite the positive dynamics of Ukrainian indicators, remains very significant in absolute terms. In 2021, Ukraine's spending on digitalization amounted to 0.0465 billion euros, while in the EU the corresponding costs were estimated at approximately 40 billion euros, which formed a gap of more than eight hundred times, reflecting the difference in financial capabilities and the scale of the economies. By 2023, Ukrainian funding had grown to 0.0628 billion euros, and European funding to almost 50 billion euros, which somewhat reduced the relative distance, but preserved the fundamental asymmetry. In 2024, with a further increase in Ukrainian spending to EUR 0.0759 billion and an increase in EU funding to approximately EUR 55 billion, the scale ratio decreased to 725 times, indicating a gradual, albeit slow, reduction in the gap in absolute resource volumes.

Table 5. Digitalization financing in Ukraine and the EU, billion euros

Indicator	2021	2023	2024	Change 2024–2023
Ukraine: spending on digitalization	0.0465	0.0628	0.0759	+0.0131
EU: costs of digital transformation	40.0	50.0	55.0	+5.0
Share in the budget - Ukraine, %	0.10	0.13	0.09	-0.04
Share in the budget - EU, %	15.1	15.1	15.1	0.0
EU advantage over Ukraine, times	860	796	725	-71

**Source: calculated by the authors, Ministry of Finance of Ukraine; Budget Committee of the Verkhovna Rada; Law of the European Union, Ukraine to receive EUR 2.6 million for digitalization of services provided by Ministry of Digital Transformation.*

The analysis of the shares of digitalization in budgets highlights the structural differences in approaches, as in Ukraine this indicator fluctuated within 0.09–0.13%, demonstrating the sensitivity of digital programs to overall budget dynamics, while in the EU it remained stable at around 15.1%, reflecting the strategic priority of digital transformation in the Union’s long-term financial architecture. Taken together, these comparisons demonstrate that, despite Ukraine’s notable progress in increasing funding for digital reforms, the gap with the EU remains significant not only in absolute terms but also in relative budgetary priority, which creates a long-term challenge for the convergence of institutional and technological standards of public administration.

Thus, financing for digitalization in Ukraine in 2021–2024 grew in absolute terms, which creates opportunities for intensive development of civil servants’ competencies and increasing their professional readiness for digital transformations. The structure of expenditures demonstrates a redistribution in favor of innovation and IT projects, which ensures the development of new technological solutions and modernization of infrastructure, while supporting e-government, information systems and cybersecurity. A comparison with the EU indicates a significant gap in the scale of financing, which emphasizes the need for strategic strengthening of investments in the development of digital competencies and comprehensive programs for the professionalization of the public service to achieve compliance with European standards of governance and the effectiveness of digital transformation.

However, in modern conditions, it is relevant to build a strategy for the professionalization of public service in the

digitalization context, which is due to several key factors. First, the pace of digital transformation in Ukraine (in particular, the deployment of over 140 services in “Diia” as of 2025, HRMIS coverage of over 90% of government bodies, mandatory testing of digital competencies in competitions) significantly outpaces the pace of adaptation of the human capital of the public service. Second, the analysis of advanced training programs in 2025 demonstrates the massive coverage of the topics of digital literacy, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and information security, but at the same time reveals the fragmentation of approaches and insufficient integration with the performance assessment system and personnel reserve. Third, empirical data (in particular, the increase in the perception of public services as “innovative” from 30% in 2020-2023 to 45.8% in 2025) indicate positive dynamics, but indicate the need to move from tactical measures to a strategic approach.

The professionalization of public service in the digitalization context should not be reduced to individual measures of advanced training or technical modernization of workplaces, but should constitute the comprehensive adaptation of the entire institutional system of public administration to the new reality, in which a significant part of public functions, management processes and communication practices is carried out in the digital dimension. This process should involve not only the renewal of individual competencies, but also the transformation of organizational culture, personnel mechanisms, professional development methods and principles of work organization, aimed at achieving a model of effective, transparent, fast and citizen -centric public administration (Fig. 2).

In the professionalization of the public service in the conditions of digitalization, the key

should be the systemic transformation of the requirements for professional competencies. This component is a basic element, since it is the updating of the competency profile that determines the ability of public administration entities to adapt to the paradigm of digital governance (e-governance) and the service state. The main regulatory and methodological document in Ukraine is the Digital Competence Framework for Civil Servants of Ukraine

(approved by the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine and the National Agency of Ukraine for Civil Service in 2021, with further updates and integration into the professional development system) (Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, 2025). The framework is based on the European DigComp model, adapted to the specifics of public management.

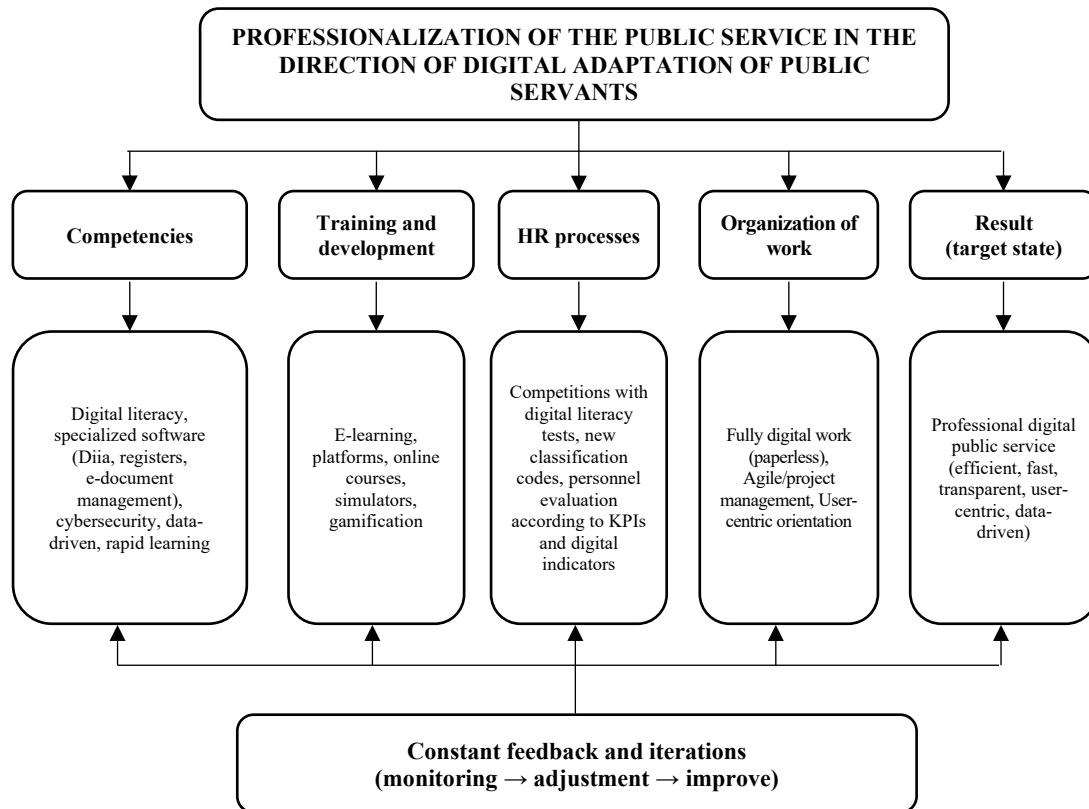


Figure 2. Structured strategy model for professionalizing public service in the digitalization context

**Source: compiled by the authors.*

Transformation of training and advanced training methods is a key mechanism for adapting human capital to the requirements of digital governance. This block involves a transition from traditional forms (face-to-face seminars, lectures) to innovative, digitally - oriented approaches that ensure flexibility, personalization and efficiency of training. According to the Strategy for Reforming Public Administration and Action plans for the development of the vocational training system (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2025a), the emphasis should be on the integration of digital tools to improve competencies, in

particular in the areas of e- governance, data literacy and cybersecurity.

Conclusions

Professionalization of public service in the digitalization context is not just technical improvement or additional training of public servants, but the fundamental transformation of the essence and functioning of public (state and municipal) service as a social institution. Professionalization of public service is a systemic, continuous and multi-layered process of adapting the entire public administration system to the new reality, in which the state largely exists, functions

and interacts with citizens in the digital dimension.

In the implementing the strategy of professionalizing the public service in the digitalization context, professionalization itself ceases to be just an improvement in the individual qualifications of a public servant, but becomes:

- reorientation of the professional identity of a public servant - from a performer of paper procedures to the active user and co-author of digital government services;

- changing the content of professional activities - from routine document flow to data-driven decision-making, project management in an agile environment and constant use of digital tools (Diia, registers, Trembita, HRMIS, AI assistants);

- restructuring of organizational culture - from bureaucratic hierarchy and conservatism to the culture of speed, transparency, innovation, data responsibility and citizen -centricity;

- rethinking the principles of public service

- professionalism is now inextricably linked to

digital competence, cyber hygiene, ethical data handling, the ability to counter disinformation and ensure inclusion in the digital environment.

Thus, the professionalization of the public service in the digitalization context is not an auxiliary process, but a fundamental change in its nature, namely: from the traditional bureaucratic model to the modern digitally - oriented, flexible, data-driven and resilient model of public administration. It transforms the public service from the institution that responds to changes to the institution that actively shapes and implements the digital state, thereby ensuring its effectiveness, legitimacy and competitiveness in the digital era.

It is in this sense that professionalization becomes the strategic resource for national security, sustainable development, and European integration of Ukraine, i.e.: a state which public service cannot function professionally in the digital dimension loses its ability to qualitatively perform its main functions before citizens and international partners.

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