N. Khymytsia
Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Lviv, Ukraine
nataliia.o.khymytsia@lpnu.ua
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4076-3830

O. Morusko
Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Lviv, Ukraine
oleksandr.o.morushko@lpnu.ua
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8872-2830

THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND INFORMATION CENTRES IN THE FORMATION OF CRITICAL THINKING AND CIVIC VALUES IN THE DIGITAL SOCIETY: GLOBAL, EUROPEAN AND UKRAINIAN STRATEGIES

The relevance of the article. Today's digital society faces unprecedented challenges from the spread of disinformation, information warfare, and the rise of manipulative technologies. This undermines democratic values, weakens trust in institutions, and makes it difficult to build civic solidarity. In the context of information overload, libraries, archives, and information institutions are becoming particularly relevant as conductors of reliable information, the development of critical thinking, and civic values.

The purpose of the article is to analyze modern strategies for the formation of critical thinking and civic values in the digital society and to determine the leading role of libraries, archives, and public information institutions in this process on the examples of the USA, Europe, and Ukraine.

The methodology. The study is based on the analysis of scientific literature, comparative analysis of international and national strategies, and case studies of successful practices of implementing innovative approaches in the activities of libraries and archives.

The results. Modern strategies for the formation of critical thinking and civic values in the digital society in the United States, Europe, and Ukraine are analyzed, which confirms their common priority in the development of digital literacy and media literacy. It has been determined that libraries, archives, and public information institutions play a key role as centers of access to reliable information, educational resources, and platforms for the development of critical analysis skills and responsible digital citizenship. It is found that the successful implementation of strategies requires intersectoral cooperation, integration of innovative technologies, and constant updating of educational programs. It is demonstrated that information institutions are the foundation for society's resilience to disinformation and the formation of responsible citizenship.

The scientific novelty. The scientific novelty lies in a comprehensive, comparative analysis of the strategies of the United States, Europe, and Ukraine to foster critical thinking and civic values, as well as in highlighting new approaches to branding libraries and archives in the context of digital transformation.

The practical significance. The results of the study can be used to develop educational programs, improve the skills of employees of libraries, archives, and information centers, and improve national strategies for media literacy and digital education**.**

The conclusions. Fostering critical thinking and civic values in a digital society is a shared priority for the United States, Europe, and Ukraine. Libraries, archives, and information institutions play a leading role in providing access to reliable information, developing source analysis skills, educating, and supporting civic engagement. Successful implementation of the strategies requires cross-sectoral cooperation, integration of innovative technologies, and constant updating of educational approaches. Systematic trainings on media literacy, digital ethics, and the organization of open information platforms and interactive programs for different age and social groups are of practical importance. The experience of the United States, European countries, and Ukraine demonstrates that information institutions are the foundation for society's resilience to disinformation and the formation of responsible citizenship.

Keywords: *critical thinking, civic values, digital society, libraries, archives, information institutions; media literacy, digital literacy, disinformation, social communications, information security.*

Н. О. Химиця
кандидат історичних наук, доцент, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», м. Львів, Україна

О. О. Морушко
кандидат історичних наук, доцент, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», м. Львів, Україна

РОЛЬ БІБЛІОТЕК, АРХІВІВ ТА ІНФОРМАЦІЙНИХ ЦЕНТРІВ У ФОРМУВАННІ КРИТИЧНОГО МИСЛЕННЯ І ГРОМАДЯНСЬКИХ ЦІННОСТЕЙ У ЦИФРОВОМУ СУСПІЛЬСТВІ: СВІТОВІ, ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКІ ТА УКРАЇНСЬКІ СТРАТЕГІЇ

У статті проаналізовано сучасні стратегії формування критичного мислення та громадянських цінностей у цифровому суспільстві з акцентом на ролі бібліотек, архівів та інформаційних центрів. Визначено, що в умовах інформаційних війн, фейків і маніпуляцій ці установи стають ключовими майданчиками для розвитку медіаграмотності, цифрової етики й громадянської відповідальності. Досліджено досвід США, Європи та України: у США акцент зроблено на цифровій грамотності та інтеграції цифрового громадянства в освіту; у Європі — на підтримці прозорості та верифікації джерел; в Україні — на реалізації національних стратегій медіаграмотності й читання. Стаття пропонує системний підхід до використання інформаційних установ як агентів змін у цифрову епоху та окреслює перспективи подальших досліджень у цій сфері. У висновках зазначено, що формування критичного мислення та громадянських цінностей у цифровому суспільстві є спільним пріоритетом для стратегій установ США, Європи та України. Успішна реалізація стратегій потребує міжсекторальної співпраці, інтеграції інноваційних технологій і постійного оновлення освітніх підходів.

Ключові слова: *критичне мислення, громадянські цінності, цифрове суспільство, бібліотеки, архіви, інформаційні установи, медіаграмотність, дезінформація, соціальні комунікації, інформаційна безпека.*

The relevance of the article. Today, in the context of political polarization and information wars, civic values and critical thinking have become key means of supporting democratic processes. The information space is saturated with fakes, manipulations, and information wars that undermine democratic institutions and civil solidarity. In such circumstances, the development of critical thinking becomes a key means of countering disinformation and supporting democratic processes. There is a growing demand for quality information services and reliable information, which is the basis for making the right decisions. The enormous amount of information generated and published on the Internet can help an average user only if his or her information and communication competence is formed and media literacy meets all the modern challenges of the information society, taking into account the huge number of manipulative social and communication technologies. This increases the demand for the services of professional institutions, primarily libraries, archives, and information centers, where citizens can obtain reliable information, learn to analyze it, and form their own position.

Problem statement. The solution to this problem is extremely urgent and is related to the practical tasks of developing educational programs, improving the work of information institutions, and forming responsible digital citizenship. The role of libraries, archives, and state information institutions in this process remains insufficiently studied, which necessitates a systematic analysis of their contribution to the formation of critical thinking and civic values in the context of digital transformation.

Related works. A classic study in the field of social capital and civic participation is the work of Robert Putnam (2000). The author analyzes the reasons for the decline in the social capital of Americans and explains that this process is associated with technological changes, urbanization, and changes in the structure of the family and the work environment. Robert Putnam notes that the decline in social capital has a negative impact on the quality of democratic governance, the level of trust between citizens, and the overall stability of society and proposes measures to revive civic engagement, in particular through education, support for local initiatives, and the development of new forms of social interaction. An important contribution to understanding how the digital age affects civic values is the work of Anthony G. Wilhelm (2000), where the author argues that online political participation is not sufficiently inclusive, as access to digital platforms depends on resources and the level of digital literacy. Anthony G. Wilhelm emphasizes that digital technologies can be both a means of progress and a threat to democracy if their use is not regulated by effective public policies and public information institutions. Information institutions as a 'common good' are discussed in Douglas Schuler & Peter Day (2004). Libraries are seen as important centers of access to information and support for civic engagement. Bruce Bimber's (2003) study emphasizes the importance of libraries and archives as centers of equal access to information and support for civic engagement. The author substantiates the thesis that access to information is key to the democratic process, and libraries and archives play an important role in ensuring equal access to knowledge.

The essential meaning of critical thinking, its functionality and prospects for development are analyzed by V. H. Voronkova, O. P. Kyvliuk, & V. O. Nikitenko (2023). The authors consider critical thinking as a key mechanism of adaptation to the hyperreal world, where information is often a simulation rather than a reflection of reality. The role of libraries and archives in the formation of critical thinking is emphasised, as they provide access to reliable information and promote the development of source analysis skills. The current state of media and information literacy in public libraries in Australia and Finland is analysed in N. V. Shchus, & T. M. Yavorska (2019). The authors examine the role of libraries in developing critical thinking skills and digital literacy among users. Examples of library projects and programmes that contribute to the development of media education and are in demand among the population are given. The article by N. I. Zaichenko (2015) reveals the importance of the National Teachers' Library of Argentina as an information and educational centre in the context of modern education reform and highlights the significant social role of the library institution in shaping social intelligence and supporting cultural and civic values. The study by L. Pysarenko (2021) focuses on the concepts of media literacy and media competence; provides UNESCO recommendations on critical perception of information, source verification and data systematisation; emphasises that libraries and archives play an important role in providing access to reliable information and promote the development of media literacy among citizens (2021). An analysis of modern practices of implementing media literacy programmes in the work of Ukrainian libraries is presented in the work of N. Khymytsia (2024).

The purpose of the article is to provide a comprehensive study of modern strategies for the formation of critical thinking and civic values in the digital society through the activities of libraries, archives, and information centers. In contrast to previous works that considered these institutions primarily as sources of information, this publication emphasizes their role as active agents of social change, promoting the development of media literacy, digital ethics, and civic responsibility. The article deepens the understanding of the intersectoral interaction of information institutions, highlights new patterns of influence of digital transformations on their activities, and analyzes innovative approaches to outreach and branding of libraries in the context of information challenges. The study complements existing concepts by offering a systematic approach to the formation of critical thinking and civic values, which is key to ensuring the sustainability of a democratic society.

The results. Today, all countries are facing a number of challenges that make the development of civic values and critical thinking more urgent. The main challenges are:

1. **Disinformation and manipulation.** Despite their high level of education, citizens of even developed countries often fall victim to fake news and propaganda. This is especially true in the context of political polarization and information wars.
2. **The rise of populism and radicalization.** Political movements based on emotions rather than facts are gaining popularity. Critical thinking helps citizens analyze political statements and make informed decisions.

3. **Digital security and ethics.** In a world where technology plays a key role, it is important to understand the principles of digital security, personal data protection, and ethical use of information.
4. **Civic engagement and responsibility.** Democracy requires active citizens who not only vote but also participate in social processes. Civic values contribute to the formation of a responsible society.
5. **Global challenges.** Climate change, social inequality, and migration crises require citizens to be able to critically assess the situation and seek rational solutions.

To overcome these challenges of the information society, specific strategies for the development of critical thinking and civic values are proposed, with an emphasis on the role of libraries, archives, and public information institutions.

The IFLA/UNESCO Digital Library Manifesto emphasizes the role of libraries in bridging the digital divide by creating global digital collections. The main principles of information institutions are compatibility of systems for knowledge exchange between the countries; preservation of digital heritage through mass digitization of archival materials; and transformation of libraries into centers of social integration providing access to educational resources (e.g., online courses on media literacy).

In the United States, the focus is on the development of digital literacy, ethical online behavior, and responsible attitudes to information. The main areas of activity of information institutions include the integration of digital citizenship into curricula, teacher training, and the involvement of families and communities in supporting digital competencies. The role of libraries, archives, and government information institutions in the United States is identified as critical to the implementation of these strategies. Libraries act as centers of access to reliable information and venues for media literacy and critical thinking skills. Archives ensure the preservation of digital heritage and open access to historical data, which contributes to the formation of civic awareness. State information institutions coordinate the development of digital education standards, implement resources for teaching digital citizenship, and support the professional development of teachers and the creation of educational platforms. In particular, the Discovery Education Digital Citizenship Initiative provides free resources for teachers and students, promoting safe and responsible behavior in the digital environment. National strategies include the creation of specialized councils and working groups to define digital citizenship standards and ensure their implementation in the curriculum.

The policy document "Challenges and Proposals for an Engaged Digital Citizenship" (ALL DIGITAL) from the European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, published in December 2024, defines the important mission of the library as a platform for teaching empathy in the digital environment. The Council of Europe has launched the European Year of Digital Civic Education 2025, which aims to combat disinformation through source verification education. In the context of this annual plan, archives and libraries are involved in the creation of interactive exhibitions (for example, virtual tours of historical documents). Other planned events include a conference in Strasbourg to discuss digital ethics standards and platforms

for young people to share their experiences (critical thinking hackathons). In addition, the EU's digital rights policy defines archives as institutions that ensure transparency of public administration through the publication of digitized documents. An example: digital "citizen wallets" for storing educational certificates.

Ukraine has developed several strategies for developing critical thinking and civic values in the digital society:

1. The Strategy for the Development of Media Literacy in Ukraine until 2026. This strategy, approved by the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, provides for:
   – Coordination between government agencies, the public sector, and international partners;
   – Conducting national media literacy campaigns targeting different age groups, including elder people and residents of remote areas;
   – Collaborate with local communities, media, and technology companies for educational purposes;
   – Integrating media literacy into formal and non-formal education with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

2. Action Plan "Reading as a Life Strategy" (2023-2032). This government plan supports the development of critical thinking through the promotion of reading as a means of shaping civic values and information analysis skills. It envisages an active role for libraries as centers of access to knowledge and educational resources.

3. State initiatives on digital literacy, such as the Diia.Osvita platform and other projects of the Ministry of Digital Transformation, are aimed at improving citizens' digital skills, which are the basis for critical perception of information in the digital environment.

Conclusions. In today's digital society, libraries, archives, and public information institutions are key institutions in fostering critical thinking and civic values. A number of strategies have been developed at the global and European levels to emphasize their role: The IFLA/UNESCO Digital Library Manifesto defines libraries as centers for bridging the digital divide and social inclusion, as well as leaders in media literacy and digital education. The European ALL DIGITAL strategy and the Council of Europe's European Year of Digital Civic Education 2025 initiative focus on the role of libraries and archives in teaching source verification, creating interactive educational platforms, and ensuring transparency of public administration through open access to digital archives. Ukraine is implementing the Strategy for the Development of Media Literacy until 2026, the Action Plan "Reading as a Life Strategy" and state initiatives on digital literacy, which define libraries as centers of enlightenment, archives as guarantors of access to the national information heritage, and state information institutions as coordinators of the implementation of information security and digital education policies. These institutions create the conditions for society's resilience to disinformation, the development of information analysis skills, and responsible citizenship. In addition, the Ukrainian experience of integrating media literacy into

national strategies, in particular through the development of libraries and digital archives, demonstrates the promise of a comprehensive approach that can be adapted and developed in line with international practices. At the same time, there is a need to strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks, more actively engage the public, and expand access to digital educational resources.

In our opinion, further development of the theory and practice of critical thinking and civic values in the digital society, as well as strengthening the role of information institutions as key agents of change in the modern information ecosystem, will be significantly facilitated by assessing the effectiveness of national media literacy strategies through quantitative and qualitative research, which will also help to adjust policies and increase their effectiveness.

Список посилань

Воронкова, В. Г., Кивлюк, О. П., & Нікітенко, В. О. (2023). Критичне мислення у контексті постмодерністського дискурсу Жана Бодріяра. *Освітній дискурс*, *45*(7–9). https://doi.org/10.33930/ed.2019.5007.45(7-9)-3

Зайченко Н. І. (2015). Національна учительська бібліотека Аргентини як інформаційно-освітній центр. *Молодь і ринок*, *11*(130), 10–14.

Писаренко, Л. М. (2021). Медіаграмотність як інструмент інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій. *Вчені записки ТНУ імені В. І. Вернадського. Серія: Філологія. Журналістика, 4*(3). https://doi.org/10.32838/2710-4656/2021.4-3/27

Щусь, Н. В., & Яворська, Т. М. (2019). Формування медіа- та інформаційної грамотності у публічних бібліотеках Австралії та Фінляндії. *Вісник студентського наукового товариства Донецького національного університету імені Василя Стуса*, *2*(11). https://jvestnik-sss.donnu.edu.ua/article/view/7650

Beglu, R.R., and Ahshik, S.S. (2023). Main strategies and services of academic libraries during the COVID-19 pandemic. *IFLA Journal*, *49*(2), 286–297. https://doi.org/10.1177/03400352221130778

Bimber, B. (2003). *Information and American democracy: Technology in the evolution of political power*. Cambridge University Press.

Grizzle, A., Wilson, C., Douai, A., Dezuanni, M., & Cheung, C. K. (2013). *Media and information literacy: Policy and strategy guidelines*. UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000225606

Khymytsia, N. (2024). Adapting libraries to new social and technological challenges: current trends in the branding of Ukrainian library institutions. *Visnyk of Kharkiv State Academy of Culture*, *66*, 100–113. https://doi.org/10.31516/2410-5333.066.08

Khymytsia, N., & Kuchma, M. (2021). Features of positioning of German university libraries on official websites. *Visnyk of Kharkiv State Academy of Culture*, 60, 43–52. https://doi.org/10.31516/2410-5333.060.04

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Touchstone Books/Simon & Schuster.

Schuler, D., & Day, P. (Eds.). (2003). *Shaping the network society: The new role of civil society in cyberspace*. MIT Press. https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/6204.001.0001

Song, J. S., & Sridhar, D. (2021, June 15). How states can support the next generation of digital citizens. *ISTE*. https://iste.org/blog/how-states-can-support-the-next-generation-of-digital-citizens

Wilhelm, A. G. (2000). *Democracy in the digital age: Challenges to political life in cyberspace.* Routledge.

References

Voronkova, V. H., Kyvliuk, O. P., & Nikitenko, V. O. (2023). Critical Thinking in the Context of Jean Baudrillard's Postmodernist Discourse. *Osvitnii dyskurs,* 45(7–9). https://doi.org/10.33930/ed.2019.5007.45(7-9)-3. [In Ukrainian].

Zaichenko, N. I. (2015). The National Teacher Library of Argentina as an Information and Educational Center. *Molod i rynok*, 11(130), 10–14. [In Ukrainian].

Pysarenko, L. M. (2021). Media Literacy as a Tool of Information and Communication Technologies. *Vcheni zapysky TNU imeni V. I. Vernadskoho. Seriia: Filolohiia. Zhurnalistyka*, *4*(3). https://doi.org/10.32838/2710-4656/2021.4-3/27. [In Ukrainian].

Shchus, N. V., & Yavorska, T. M. (2019). Formation of Media and Information Literacy in Public Libraries of Australia and Finland. *Visnyk studentskoho naukovoho tovarystva Donetskoho natsionalnoho universytetu imeni Vasylia Stusa*, *2*(11). https://jvestnik-sss.donnu.edu.ua/article/view/7650. [In Ukrainian].

Beglu, R.R., and Ahshik, S.S. (2023). Main strategies and services of academic libraries during the COVID-19 pandemic. *IFLA Journal*, *49*(2), 286–297. https://doi.org /10.1177/03400352221130778. [In English].

Bimber, B. (2003). *Information and American democracy: Technology in the evolution of political power*. Cambridge University Press. [In English].

Grizzle, A., Wilson, C., Douai, A., Dezuanni, M., & Cheung, C. K. (2013). *Media and information literacy: Policy and strategy guidelines*. UNESCO. https://unesdoc. unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000225606. [In English].

Khymytsia, N. (2024). Adapting libraries to new social and technological challenges: current trends in the branding of Ukrainian library institutions. *Visnyk of Kharkiv State Academy of Culture*, *66*, 100–113. https://doi.org/10.31516/2410-5333.066.08. [In English].

Khymytsia, N., & Kuchma, M. (2021). Features of positioning of German university libraries on official websites. *Visnyk of Kharkiv State Academy of Culture*, 60, 43–52. https://doi.org/10.31516/2410-5333.060.04. [In English].

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community.* Touchstone Books/Simon & Schuster. [In English].

Schuler, D., & Day, P. (Eds.). (2003). *Shaping the network society: The new role of civil society in cyberspace*. MIT Press. https://doi.org/10.7551/ mitpress/6204.001.0001. [In English].

Song, J. S., & Sridhar, D. (2021, June 15). How states can support the next generation of digital citizens. *ISTE*. https://iste.org/blog/how-states-can-support-the-next-generation-of-digital-citizens. [In English].

Wilhelm, A. G. (2000). *Democracy in the digital age: Challenges to political life in cyberspace.* Routledge. [In English].