Managing migration risks by means of electronic technologies

Gestionando los riesgos de la migración mediante tecnologías electrónicas

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ABSTRACT:
The purpose of this study was to explore some of the present-day practices relating to the use of electronic technologies in managing migration risks in order to assess the degree to which electronic communications are employed today by regional authorities concerned with the implementation of Russia’s migration policy. The authors utilized the following methods: 1) analysis of electronic services run by regional authorities concerned with migration policy; 2) expert semi-structured interviews with representatives of state and municipal authorities and non-governmental organizations (N=19, July–September 2016); 3) a survey of immigrants (by questionnaire) (n=150, Volgograd Oblast, July–August 2016); 4) a survey of the population (by questionnaire) (n=456, Volgograd Oblast, March–April 2016). The findings from these activities helped achieve the following: identify some of the migration risks affecting the social-economic situation within the region; develop a special model for managing migration risks, which presupposed making wide use of the reverse communication potential in communication between public authorities and the population and actively engaging citizens in the process of shaping regional migration policy; explore some of the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of electronic services run by public authorities concerned with migration policy; analyze these to develop and implement the model for managing migration risks based on a set of criteria proposed by the authors. The study produced the following conclusions: the authors’ model for managing migration risks presupposed a set of procedures that couldn’t be put into effect without using electronic communications: gathering information on the migration situation; choosing and discussing a strategy for managing migration risks and techniques for mitigating negative effects; organizing reverse communication to be able to learn about people’s reaction to this kind of activities; evaluating the results from the implementation of a specific solution. An analysis of electronic services engaged in resolving migration issues indicated that the majority of these services were aimed at providing information and certain services, with most lacking interactive functionality and providing only limited functionality for reverse communication.

Keywords: migration risks, electronic participation, adaptation, integration, interaction between public authorities and the population, electronic government, social media.

RESUMEN:
El objetivo de este estudio fue explorar algunas de las prácticas actuales relacionadas con el uso de tecnologías electrónicas para gestionar los riesgos de la migración a fin de evaluar el grado en que las autoridades regionales emplean actualmente las comunicaciones electrónicas relacionadas con la implementación de la política migratoria de Rusia. Los autores utilizaron los siguientes métodos: 1) análisis de los servicios electrónicos administrados por las autoridades regionales relacionadas con la política de migración; 2) entrevistas semiestructuradas de expertos con representantes de autoridades estatales y municipales y organizaciones no gubernamentales (N = 19, julio–septiembre de 2016); 3) una encuesta de inmigrantes (por cuestionario) (n = 150, Volgograd Oblast, julio-agosto de 2016); 4) una encuesta de la población (por cuestionario) (n = 456, Volgograd Oblast, marzo-abril de 2016). Los resultados de estas actividades ayudaron a lograr lo siguiente: identificar algunos de los riesgos de migración que afectan la situación socio-económica dentro de la región; desarrollar un modelo especial para gestionar los riesgos de la migración, que presupone hacer un amplio uso del potencial de comunicación inversa entre las autoridades públicas y la población e involucrar activamente a los ciudadanos en el proceso de configuración de la política migratoria regional; explorar algunas de las características cuantitativas y cualitativas de los servicios electrónicos administrados por las autoridades públicas relacionadas con la política de migración; analizar estos para desarrollar e implementar el modelo de gestión de los riesgos de migración en función de un conjunto de criterios propuestos por los autores. El estudio arrojó las siguientes conclusiones: el modelo de los autores para gestionar los riesgos de la migración presuponía un conjunto de procedimientos que no podrían llevarse a la práctica sin el uso de las comunicaciones electrónicas; la recopilación de información sobre la situación migratoria; elegir y discutir una estrategia para gestionar los riesgos de la migración y las técnicas para mitigar los efectos negativos; organizar la comunicación inversa para poder conocer la reacción de las personas a este tipo de actividades; evaluar los resultados de la implementación de una solución específica. Un análisis de los servicios electrónicos dedicados a resolver los problemas de migración indica que la mayoría de estos servicios estaban destinados a proporcionar información y ciertos servicios, cuidando la mayoría de la funcionalidad interactiva y proporcionando solo una funcionalidad limitada para la comunicación inversa.

Palabras clave: riesgos de migración, participación electrónica, adaptación, integración, interacción entre autoridades públicas y la población, gobierno electrónico, redes sociales.

1. Introduction
Given the continual reproduction of social risks, the current situation of uncertainty, the need for highly professional antirecession governance amid an uptick in immigrant flows, imperfect legislation, an equivocal attitude on the part of the receiving population toward migrants, and a spike in xenophobic and ultratraditional sentiment, the changes in the existing social order one is witnessing today are a serious challenge for the local and global systems of regulation, cutting across just about any area of life in society and signaling the need to search for and employ novel, more efficient technologies for managing migration risks. The authors view migration risks as a measure of uncertainty and possible negative/positive consequences arising as a result of migration processes, which are influenced by the quality of the way they are managed and the kind of technology employed at all stages of the process: from identifying risks to minimizing them by way of implementing special programs (adaptation, integration, multicultural, national security, etc.).

Requirements for technologies to be employed in managing migration risks, including information technologies, are quite stiff, as they are viewed as important and significant for all participants in the migration process, i.e. a country (region) receiving migrants; a contributing country (region), from which migrants are coming; the receiving population; the leaving population (emigrants); the arriving population (immigrants). Thus, technologies for managing migration risks ought to facilitate the resolution of a set of objectives relating to migration: from global to individual ones.

Today, most researchers are convinced that implementing electronic technologies in the area of managing migration processes may, on the one hand, facilitate boosts in its efficiency, and, on the other hand, make the activity of authorities concerned with migration policy more accessible and comprehensible to the population.

2. Analysis of the literature

2.1. Managing migration risks

Managing migration risks is an area that needs further research, with the global scale and erratic course of migration processes signaling the need to search for and employ novel, more efficient, including information, technology in the area. The authors find it conceptually crucial to reconsider some of the traditional schemes for managing social processes, which may be regarded as the latest discourse in the study of migration (Collier, 2013).

Defining risk as the object of sociological analysis and investigating its implications and areas of its manifestation and utilization may be regarded today as a contentious issue and a poly-paradigmatic sociological concept. Risk is an interdisciplinary category, which has yet to be given a universally accepted definition. Each science that utilizes this concept has its own view of how to define it and how to interpret it (Beck, 2000; Luhmann, 1991; Massey, 2002; Rosa, 1998; Stark, 1991). There are two major approaches in the foreign literature that construe risk as a social phenomenon. Based on the realistic approach, risk is interpreted in scientific and technical terms. This approach is employed in technical and engineering sciences. It is centered on the concept of possible harm, as well as the idea of the possibility of figuring out, through calculations, when it may occur and what
The other crucial approach to analyzing risk is the sociocultural approach, which is focused on sociocultural contexts. This approach emerged on the basis of integrating sociocultural and sociotechnical paradigms. It comprises three major components of focus: the cultural-symbolic dimension (Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982), risk society theory (Beck, 2010; Luhmann, 1991), and calculative rationality theory (Foucault, 1969/2002). Proponents of the first focus area view risk as a component of the relationship between a person and the world around them. The second dimension is focused on macrostructural changes brought about when shifting to high modernization. Proponents of the third area of focus maintain that risk exists by way of human discourse. But, with all the variety of approaches in risk sociology, it is important that risk, as is believed by proponents of a sociocultural paradigm, is determinable and can be calculated.

The characteristics of Russia’s historical development and their impact on the development of domestic riskology, the above view of risk is only in its inception in Russia at the moment. While acknowledging the high scientific significance of researchers’ quest in the area of migration, it, nevertheless, is worth noting that research on migration risks has been rather limited, with resulting solutions having yet to be utilized extensively in public authorities’ actual governing activity. Analyses of social risks associated with migration processes cannot yet be regarded as accurate calculations based on which one could build a meaningful and effective program for managing migration processes to prevent risks from turning into reality.

The key difference between foreign and domestic approaches to defining risk is in that the former recognize and construe risk as an indispensable functional component of today’s dynamically changing social system and view it not only from a perspective of threats but from that of potential as well (Giles, 2005). Within the context of this paper, importance is the authors’ definition of migration risk as a measure of uncertainty and possible negative or positive consequences arising as a result of migration processes, which it appears to be hard for us to keep up with in wrapping our mind around due to upicks in migration and the resulting challenges facing the entire social system. Further, migration risks are an inevitable consequence of social processes occurring today in Russia and around the world (uneven economic development, armed conflicts, digital inequality, etc.) and an indispensable functional component of the social system in a climate of continual social transformations.

Special significance in the area of managing migration risks is being attached to aligning with present-day realities and the spatial-temporal characteristics of regions that are contributors and those that are recipients of migrants, which presupposes taking account of all manner of available resources, factors of attracting or pushing out in migrants, and active, by entities which, through the use of various communication channels, particularly the Internet, a resource particularly relevant to this study, may influence migrants’ decision making, starting with making up one’s mind to migrate and through to receiving assistance adapting and integrating into the society of the receiving country or region.

Among the highest-priority objectives for public authorities concerned with migration policy to address today are identifying migration risks, analyzing the consequences, choosing a strategy for governance, organizing reverse communication in relation to the implementation of adaptation and integration programs, and administering control over carrying them into effect. These objectives presuppose active participation on citizens’ part, which is not likely to be possible without the use of information-communications technology.

2.2. Electronic technologies in governance

Our present-day information society is witnessing rapid penetration of Internet technologies into and its ever-increasing influence on all aspects of modern life. Most researchers focus on three major areas of electronic communication: providing information via electronic services, public authorities and citizens communicating via reverse communication channels, and engaging in partner interaction, which implies cultivating equal relations between public authorities and citizens (Caldow, 2004). Note that the initiative may come both from government establishments and from the most active members of the general public. Based on this, it may be worth focusing on the following channels for communication via electronic technologies:

- information services offered as part of electronic government that are created by public authorities in order to boost the efficiency of their work;
- platforms for citizens’ electronic participation in governance (including social media resources) that are initiated by citizens.

Electronic government may be regarded as an efficient medium for organizing this kind of multilevel and differently-directed communication. Currently, most researchers are focused on three major types of electronic communication: providing information via electronic services, public authorities and citizens communicating via reverse communication channels, and engaging in partner interaction, which implies cultivating equal relations between public authorities and citizens.

In the theoretical literature, researchers have not yet reached a consensus on the interrelationship between the key concepts pervading electronic communication between public authorities and society. For instance, the central term ‘citizens’ electronic participation in governance’ (‘e-participation’) is construed in a variety of ways due to the fact that each researcher exploring the concept tries to define it in their own way, often without taking into consideration the contribution of their predecessors, or tends to dispense with a definition altogether (Van Belle & Cupido, 2013).

The present-day electronic literature has produced two major approaches to construing the term ‘citizens’ electronic participation in governance’ (‘e-participation’). Proponents of the first approach view electronic participation as a component part and an outcome of the development of the concept of electronic government (Macintosh, 2006). This approach is based on analysis of the place and role of citizens’ electronic participation as a structural element of electronic government (Layne & Lee, 2001; Bennett, 2015).

Under the above approach, electronic participation is construed as a mechanism for reverse communication in electronic government, a collection of tools for interaction between citizens and public authorities. Sceptics claim that this view of electronic participation is inconsistent with the design of the entrenched 4-stage model for electronic government, proposed by American scholars K. Layne and J. Lee, which will not incorporate the mechanism of e-participation (Layne & Lee, 2001). However, in the view of researchers K. Siau and Y. Long (Siau & Long, 2005), this gives no reason to construe electronic communication as separate from reverse communication between public authorities and the population, and providing citizens with equal access to information communication channels.

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3. Methods

In conducting the study, the findings of which formed this paper’s basis, the authors employed the following methods: 1) an analysis of electronic services provided by regional authorities concerned with migration policy; 2) expert semi-structured interviews with representatives of state and municipal authorities and non-governmental organizations (N=19, June–September 2016); 3) a survey of immigrants (by questionnaire) (n=150, Volgograd Oblast, July–August 2016); 4) a survey of immigrants (by questionnaire) (n=15, Volgograd Oblast, March–April 2016).

The study’s purpose was to explore some of the present-day practices relating to the use of electronic technologies in managing migration risks. To achieve the study’s objectives, the authors had to carry out an analysis of existing electronic services run by public authorities and expert semi-structured interviews with representatives of the scholarly community specializing in the study of migration processes (Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Rostov, Stavropol, Volgograd, Izhevsk, and Kazan).

The analysis of electronic services was conducted based on specifically developed criteria for efficient electronic communications. In developing these criteria, the authors factored in the potential offered by these services in the way of building awareness among, providing consulting assistance to, and cultivating partnership relationships with citizens—the necessary conditions for implementing a proper model for managing migration risks. All in all, a total of 42 criteria were developed (Demushka, 2017), which were as follows:

1) the degree of openness and transparency of the websites of public authorities concerned with migration policy;
2) the number and quality of electronic services offered on the websites of these public authorities;
3) the availability of reverse communication functionality, put in place by these public authorities to assess migration risks in the region and develop an appropriate migration policy;
4) the degree to which these public authorities engaged citizens in discussing the concept of regional migration policy.

The study’s results were supplemented with data from a series of surveys conducted by the authors between 2016 and 2017. As part of RFBI grant No. 16-13-34011 (Migration Risks in a Multiethnic Region: Sociological and Managerial Analysis), the authors conducted a survey of the receiving population (by questionnaire) (n=500, Volgograd Oblast, July–August 2016), in-depth interviews with immigrants (n=15, July–September 2016); expert semi-structured interviews with representatives of the scholarly community specializing in the study of migration processes (Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Rostov, Stavropol, Volgograd, Izhevsk, and Kazan) (n=21, July 2016–November 2017).

Taking account of the special nature of managing migration processes and today’s active use of information-communications technologies and Internet platforms, from electronic government to social networks, the authors developed a model for managing migration risks. The model is a multi-stage process comprised of 5 blocks.

**Block 1** defines the purpose behind managing risks in the area of migration, which is ensuring a balance within the interethnic area of regional governance and other areas related to it and minimizing negative effects from over-increasing migration. The situational approach to governance presupposes adjusting governance objectives depending on various relevant factors. The objectives for the model managing migration risks can also be adjusted, including based on data collected via electronic communications, especially at the municipal level.

**Block 2** is associated with the stage of obtaining information about the migration situation and identifying risk; here, an invaluable source of information is social media, but that is provided that one observes all legal and ethical norms and those for the proper use of social media content.

**Block 3** involves analysis to identify the consequences of risks; here, one determines the probability of negative consequences arising under certain conditions, identifies the level of migration risk, and develops an action program for managing migration risks.

**Block 4** deals with reacting and implies the choice of strategy for managing migration risk and the choice of techniques for minimizing negative effects, as well as developing an action program for managing migration risks.

**Block 5**, which comprises the final three stages, implies the actual organization of the process of management and getting a response through reverse communication and involves the implementation of the program for managing risk and control, analysis, and assessment of the outcomes of the solutions found.

4. Results and discussion

An integrated sociological study revealed the following migration risks: those within the economy and the area of employment (stiffening competition in the labor market, a decreasing value of labor, off-the-books employment practices, failure to provide proper sanitary and other conditions for workers, the outflow of funds earned by immigrants to their homeland, and the emergence of “immigrant segments” within the economy); declines in society’s intellectual potential; the worsening of the criminogenic situation in the region; conflicts on a religious basis; the possibility of enclaves emerging in cities and settlements; the exacerbation of the political situation in the region due to citizens’ lack of trust in the government and the media (Drozdova, 2016).
Engaging the population in the discussion of migration policy and consulting with citizens as to the major means of implementing the model for managing migration risks does not currently appear to be possible using existing electronic services run by public authorities. The functions of utmost importance - the controlling one and the one dealing with ensuring security - are key functions in the activity of state establishment, with there being no possibilities of adaptation and interaction. All these functions should be considered as "more of a closed" one or an informationally "closed" one (e.g. in terms of openness, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation posted 48.6%, and the Federal Service for Supervision in the Field of Health Care (Roszdravnadzor) – 45.8%).

In this regard, it is worth noting some of the strengths in terms of the structure and design of the website run by Volgograd Oblast’s Administration for Migration. The website is quite easy to navigate, with an articulate and easy-to-understand structure, regularly updated, and accessible to all categories of the population (there is a version for the visually impaired), with a portion of the website available in English. The developers are also trying to attract youth audiences. In particular, one can check the news through such well-known and popular services as Twitter (regular information updates), Facebook (updates a couple of times per week), V Kontakte (regular and timely updates), and YouTube. These resources have just one shortcoming, but it is quite substantial - all links to social media and tabs on the Web page of the Administration for Migration (as well as content in English and content for the visually impaired) deal with information that has to do only with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. An analysis indicates the website’s poor informativeness when it comes to issues relating to migration.

At the same time, the website provides citizens with the opportunity to benefit from certain online services relating to migration. These include tracking the progress of one’s foreign passport application, filing an application with respect to hiring a highly qualified professional, getting one’s state duty paid, scheduling an appointment online, and tracking the progress of one’s permanent or temporary residence application. In addition, the website provides the addresses, phone numbers, and hours of operation of regional agencies within the Administration for Migration. There is no contact information for agency officers. It is worth noting that searching for what one needs may require some effort, as not too much of the information is readily out in the foreground. Overall, the Web page for the Administration for Migration is mainly aimed at providing information. Yet, it still needs work even in that area. Reverse communication functionality is present on the website run by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Citizens can fill in an online request to the relevant department, including the Administration for Migration. The website offers no functionality that would allow one to get quicker service, put in a suggestion of one's own, or have a say on issues that matter to them.

Unfortunately, far from all citizens and immigrants in Russia use the above services in full measure. On the one hand, this may be due to the government’s reluctance to view the population as a full participant in social interaction (Leonoa, 2010; Demushina, 2017). On the other hand, it may be due to citizens’ lack of trust in public authorities at any level. People’s attitude toward the government in Russia may be illustrated by the findings from a population survey by questionnaire conducted by researchers at the Volgograd Institute of Management (n=456, Volgograd Oblast, March–April 2016). Based on the findings, only 40% of respondents who used the Internet visited official government websites, with most doing so with a frequency of 1–2 times per month or less. Currently, according to data on the websites of regional government establishments, there are at least 48 such websites.

The least number of visits to government websites to get information was posted by rural residents, as well as retired citizens and ripe old-timers. Only 0.8% of those who took part in the survey said they visited official government websites daily, while 43% said they did not visit those websites at all. As one can see, to the population the end objectives and goals for electronic government, expressed in information openness and the engagement of citizens in the process of regional governance, still remain “technology for the sake of technology” (Hill, Dean, & Murphy, 2013), an “artificial practice”. In the authors' view, these indicators bespeak the insufficient promotion of electronic services and low levels of people’s awareness of the potential opportunities offered by the Internet, as well as the habitual use of traditional interpersonal interaction among representatives of the older generation when it comes to ‘authorities – population’ communication.

Over the past few years, reforming the system of managing migration processes in Russia has not facilitated much the development of electronic communication in said area, including for a number of objective reasons, with poor results posted in terms of boosting openness, providing people with relevant information about activity by public authorities, engaging the population in some of that work, administering control over activity on the part of society, and keeping track of and managing migration risks.

Currently, the primary source of feedback from migrants is surveys organized by public authorities and research teams, which, however, do not cover all groups of migrants coming into the country and cannot always serve as a source of complete and objective information. The authors are of the view that the process of collecting data on the living conditions of migrants, the patterns of their integration, the degree of assimilation, and the effect of migration processes should be considered as one of the major indicators of the migration potential of the Russian Federation. The above data may be considered as one of the indicators of the migration potential of the Russian Federation.

Another way to obtain information, and at the same time a promising area for research, is the study of the latest migrant user communication practices observed on the Internet, which, no doubt, are a significant channel for helping migrants adapt, and all the more so integrate into the society of the receiving country. However, it appears to be quite difficult to set apart and differentiate this group on social networks, which could only be done through representatives of national diasporas and institutional actors, like national-cultural associations, etc. For instance, based on the findings from a sociological research study conducted as part of Grant No. 16-13-34011 (Migration Risks within a Polyethnic Region: A Sociological-Administrative Analysis), it was found that among the more vulnerable segments of migrant groups, which does not impose on migrants’ cultural traditions and values, counteract the spread of extremism and tackle negative perceptions of the Russian Federation, and protect the rights of children and women. Such forums enable migrants to exchange information with one another and discuss issues that are of relevance to them.

Among the most informative resources for migrants available today are the portals The Federation of Migrants of Russia (http://www.fmr-online.ru/), Liga Zakon (http://www.ligazakon.ru/), Migrants.ru (http://www.migrants.ru/), and MigrantMedia.ru (https://migrantmedia.ru/). Most of the survey respondents had no idea about these resources. However, the actual websites, despite the significance of the work they do, only provide information and cannot be regarded as a channel for engaging citizens (immigrants/emigrants and the receiving population) in the discussion of issues relating to migration policy, so they may need further enhancing and developing.

5. Conclusion

In a climate of globalization and given the advances in information technology, social media, including ethnic forums, portals, educational servers, and social networks, are bringing about superspatial forms of interaction and enable adaptation and integration, regardless of which country diaspora groups are in and what kind of relationship they are in with their ethnic homeland, including those facilitating the cultivation of cultural patterns and motivation for migrating and studying the language and culture of the receiving country – and, subsequently, motivation for accommodating and integrating immigrants and getting to know the culture of those coming in among the receiving population.

In this regard, it is worth noting some of the strengths in terms of the structure and design of the website run by Volgograd Oblast’s Administration for Migration. The website is quite easy to navigate, with an articulate and easy-to-understand structure, regularly updated, and accessible to all categories of the population (there is a version for the visually impaired), with a portion of the website available in English. The developers are also trying to attract youth audiences. In particular, one can check the news through such well-known and popular services as Twitter (regular information updates), Facebook (updates a couple of times per week), V Kontakte (regular and timely updates), and YouTube. These resources have just one shortcoming, but it is quite substantial - all links to social media and tabs on the Web page of the Administration for Migration (as well as content in English and content for the visually impaired) deal with information that has to do only with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. An analysis indicates the website’s poor informativeness when it comes to issues relating to migration.

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Unfortunately, far from all citizens and immigrants in Russia use the above services in full measure. On the one hand, this may be due to the government’s reluctance to view the population as a full participant in social interaction (Leonoa, 2010; Demushina, 2017). On the other hand, it may be due to citizens’ lack of trust in public authorities at any level. People’s attitude toward the government in Russia may be illustrated by the findings from a population survey by questionnaire conducted by researchers at the Volgograd Institute of Management (n=456, Volgograd Oblast, March–April 2016). Based on the findings, only 40% of respondents who used the Internet visited official government websites, with most doing so with a frequency of 1–2 times per month or less. Currently, according to data on the websites of regional government establishments, there are at least 48 such websites.

The least number of visits to government websites to get information was posted by rural residents, as well as retired citizens and ripe old-timers. Only 0.8% of those who took part in the survey said they visited official government websites daily, while 43% said they did not visit those websites at all. As one can see, to the population the end objectives and goals for electronic government, expressed in information openness and the engagement of citizens in the process of regional governance, still remain “technology for the sake of technology” (Hill, Dean, & Murphy, 2013), an “artificial practice”. In the authors’ view, these indicators bespeak the insufficient promotion of electronic services and low levels of people’s awareness of the potential opportunities offered by the Internet, which does not impose on migrants’ cultural traditions and values, counteract the spread of extremism and tackle negative perceptions of the Russian Federation, and protect the rights of children and women. Such forums enable migrants to exchange information with one another and discuss issues that are of relevance to them.
The authors are convinced that cultivating a multicultural model for integration requires that public authorities continue their activity on expanding openness – but do so now not so much from the standpoint of just providing information as through cultivating reciprocity and boosting people’s faith in their activity, which can be done only through cultivating responsible attitude toward their obligations and being oriented toward the engagement of citizens in the governing process. Practices of this kind can be implemented through further developing some of the resources that form part of the websites run by state authorities, creating special mobile resources, and, to a greater degree, popularizing the various forms of Internet interaction and social media at large.

This kind of approach to using electronic technology provides a different format of interaction with various national and confessional groups, which, in the authors’ view, should also be studied, as they may act as barriers or even sources of menace due to difficulty of regulating and controlling transnational communication using information technology.

Thus, the findings from regional sociological research by Russian scholars attest to a lack of online interaction between regional authorities and the local community. In the authors’ view, based on network theories of social relations formed by horizontal forms of integration (Latour, 2005), including in communication between public authorities and the population, Electronic government development presupposes reconsidering the stance taken by public authorities with respect to the population and the potential for fostering electronic participation in governing society and resolving its problems. An inevitable consequence of present-day social processes in Russia and around the world (uneven economic development, armed conflicts, social transformations, etc.) is migration risks, which are continually reproduced in a climate of social instability and inequality. Electronic government and social media at large ought to be adapted to the basis for managing social risks, as they possess the characteristics and resources required to provide a chance to remediate “the impossibility of communication” (Luhmann, 1997). Identifying migration risks using information technologies, cultivating two-way way communication with the population, and promoting citizen participation in the development of practical recommendations on managing those risks may be regarded as a strategic area for managing migration processes with a view to ensuring national and regional security and cultivating a solidary social environment.

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