

M.S. Yessimova<sup>1\*</sup> , Wang Jinsheng<sup>2</sup> , O.Ya. Kim<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Ablai Khan Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages, Kazakhstan, Almaty

<sup>2</sup>China News Service, China, Urumqi

\*e-mail: yemanshuk@mail.ru

## INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS OF JOURNALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITALIZATION OF THE MEDIA SPACE

This article attempts to analyze the concept of “international standards of journalism” and conducts research on the problem of ethical regulation of journalistic activity in the era of media digitalization. It is no secret that ethical standards of digital journalism are an important component of professional ethics in the modern information society. The days when journalists were limited only to traditional media are long gone. With the development of the Internet and social networks, the opportunities for news distribution have become unlimited. However, in this regard, a number of problems have arisen that require attention and research.

The aim of this paper is to study the concept of “international standards of journalism”, to identify the problem of implementing international standards of journalism in the digital age, as well as to identify current ethical problems and modern challenges facing journalism in the era of digitalization of the media space.

Research methods: historical-comparative, content analysis and synthesis.

The practical significance of the work lies in the fact that we analyzed and summarized theoretical works on international standards and ethical principles of journalism in the digital era, on the basis of which conclusions were drawn about the need to update the ethical standards of digital journalism. We believe that the materials of the work will be useful when teaching courses in the field of digital journalism.

The results of this work can be applied to further research of international standards of journalism in the digital environment, to promote the development of digital journalism, as well as to emphasize the importance of the compliance with ethical standards in a dynamic and highly technological media space.

**Keywords:** international standards of journalism, ethics, digital journalism, new media, legislation.

М.С. Есимова<sup>1\*</sup>, Ван Диншен<sup>2</sup>, О.Я. Ким<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Абылай Хан атындағы қазақ халықаралық қатынастар және әлем тілдері университеті, Қазақстан, Алматы қ.

<sup>2</sup>China News Service, Қытай, Үрімші қ.

\*e-mail: yemanshuk@mail.ru

### Медиа кеңістікті цифрландыру контекстіндегі журналистиканың халықаралық стандарттары

Бұл мақалада “журналистиканың халықаралық стандарттары” ұғымын талдауға және бұқаралық ақпарат құралдарын цифрландыру дәуіріндегі журналистік қызметті этикалық реттеу мәселесін зерттеуге әрекет жасалды. Цифрлық журналистиканың этикалық стандарттары қазіргі ақпараттық қоғамдағы кәсіби этиканың маңызды құрамдас бөлігі болып табылатыны жасырын емес. Журналистер тек дәстүрлі бұқаралық ақпарат құралдарымен шектелген күндер артта қалды. Интернет пен әлеуметтік медианың дамуымен жаңалықтарды тарату мүмкіндіктері шексіз болды, алайда осыған байланысты назар аударуды және зерттеуді қажет ететін бірқатар мәселелер туындады.

Бұл жұмыстың мақсаты “журналистиканың халықаралық стандарттары” ұғымын зерделеу, цифрлық дәуірде журналистиканың халықаралық стандарттарын іске асыру проблемасын анықтау, сондай-ақ медиа-кеңістікті цифрландыру дәуірінде журналистика алдында туындайтын өзекті этикалық проблемаларды, қазіргі заманғы сын-тегеуріндерді анықтау болып табылады.

Зерттеу әдістері. Бұл жұмыста зерттеудің келесі әдістері қолданылды: салыстыру, ұқсастық және жалпылау әдістері, сондай-ақ мазмұнды талдау әдісі.

Жұмыстың практикалық маңыздылығы сандық дәуірдегі журналистиканың халықаралық стандарттары мен этикалық принциптері туралы теориялық еңбектерді талдап, қорытындылағанымызда, соның негізінде цифрлық журналистиканың этикалық стандарттарын

жанарту қажеттілігі туралы қорытындылар жасалды. Жұмыс материалдары цифрлық журналистика саласындағы курстарды оқыту кезінде пайдалы болады деп ойлаймыз.

Бұл жұмыстың нәтижелері цифрлық ортадағы журналистиканың халықаралық стандарттарын одан әрі зерттеу, диджитал-журналистиканың дамуына жәрдемдесу, сондай-ақ динамикалық және жоғары технологиялық медиа кеңістікте этикалық стандарттарды сақтаудың маңыздылығын атап өту үшін қолданылуы мүмкін.

**Түйін сөздер:** журналистиканың халықаралық стандарттары, этика, цифрлық журналистика, жаңа медиа, заңнама.

М.С. Есимова<sup>1\*</sup>, Ван Диншен<sup>2</sup>, О.Я. Ким<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Казахский университет международных отношений и мировых языков  
им. Абылай хана, Казахстан, г. Алматы

<sup>2</sup>China News Service, Китай, г. Урумчи

\* e-mail: yemanshuk@mail.ru

### **Международные стандарты журналистики в контексте дигитализации медиапространства**

В данной статье предпринята попытка проанализировать понятие «международные стандарты журналистики» и проведено исследование проблемы этического регулирования журналистской деятельности в эпоху цифровизации СМИ. Не секрет, что этические стандарты цифровой журналистики являются важной составляющей профессиональной этики в современном информационном обществе. Времена, когда журналисты были ограничены только традиционными СМИ, давно прошли. С развитием Интернета и социальных сетей возможности распространения новостей стали неограниченными, однако, в этой связи возник ряд проблем, требующих внимания и исследования.

Целью данной работы является изучение понятия «международные стандарты журналистики», выявление проблемы реализации международных стандартов журналистики в цифровую эпоху, а также выделение на основании идентификации актуальных этических проблем, современных вызовов, возникающих перед журналистикой в эпоху дигитализации медиапространства.

В данной работе были использованы следующие методы исследования: методы сравнения, аналогии и обобщения, а также метод контент-анализа.

Практическая значимость работы заключается в том, что нами были проанализированы и обобщены теоретические труды по международным стандартам и этическим принципам журналистики в цифровую эпоху, на основе чего сделаны выводы о необходимости обновления этических стандартов цифровой журналистики. Полагаем, что материалы исследования будут полезны при чтении курсов в области цифровой журналистики.

Результаты данной работы могут быть применены для дальнейшего исследования международных стандартов журналистики в цифровой среде, содействовать развитию digital-журналистики, а также подчеркнуть важность соблюдения этических стандартов в динамичном и высокотехнологичном медиапространстве.

**Ключевые слова:** международные стандарты журналистики, этика, цифровая журналистика, новые медиа, законодательство.

## **Introduction**

The relevance of the topic of this study is grounded on the fact that with the rapid development of the Internet, social networks and messengers, the modern media landscape has totally changed – today new media, blogs and even messengers are becoming producers and sources of news, and sometimes even have the opportunity to form an information agenda. Gadget users, current readers and viewers practically do not buy newspapers and magazines, do not watch news through traditional communication channels (mainly representatives of the so-called generation Z – modern youth), preferring to receive information through special programs for

instant messaging – Wats App, Telegram, We Chat, etc. It is clear that in addition to the rapid transmission of messages, messengers have also become a source of various fakes and unverified information. All this has undoubtedly radically changed modern journalism – in addition to traditional media, most of which have moved to the World Wide Web, creating online analogues of their media, and online media today are actively developing the blogosphere, YouTube channels, telegram channels and other media platforms. Many users prefer this kind of communication, since such resources offer news and analytics, but not with an official subtext, but rather with a private vision and analysis of a particular situation.

Digital technologies have entered the agenda of journalists and have changed almost everything, especially the principles of collecting, creating and distributing information. The rapid development of digital technologies has significantly changed the foundations of the journalistic profession, which required a redefining of the content of this field of activity, the financial structure and relations with the audience. After this impact, journalism will not be able to be the same as before. All of the above means another serious event of the XXI century: the clash of cultures, which changes our way of life and being. The digital revolution took place without observing the legal norms and rules of the game in this new media ecosystem. This has created uncertainty that calls into question the sustainability of truth, objectivity and freedom of speech. The so-called net neutrality is still under threat, even if the media has not developed a business model and there are no laws corresponding to the new times, laws that prevent the monopoly of the media and/or the Internet as a platform for communication. Today, in the era of information wars, the rapid increase in fake information in the media environment, the neglect of elementary moral norms among engaged journalists (which is acutely manifested in the conditions of political and military conflicts), self-regulation of the journalistic community, which is implemented in ethical documents, is especially important. The information age creates the so-called “new morality”, which allows disregard for the norms and principles of generally accepted morality, sometimes demonstratively. At the head of such processes were journalism and social communications as a very strong and effective means of influencing the minds and hearts of the audience. There are hundreds of codes and other documents in the world that regulate the professional activities of journalists. The problem of professional standards in journalism and related communications is very acute, since technologies, economics and legal regimes for creating media texts regulate the activities of both professional journalists and new subjects (online community, bloggers), discussions arise regarding understanding the very essence of professional journalistic activity and ways of its ethical regulation. The process of codification of principles and norms in the world journalistic practice is about a hundred years old, and at the same time reflection (both group and personal) on the issue of journalism’s obligations to society is only increasing. This can be confirmed by the adoption of the Global Charter of Journalistic Ethics in 2019. The new communication environment has put

the issue of professional activity values at the center of internal corporate and general journalism discussions. It is obvious that the time has come for modern research on these problems, since the research of the past years no longer meets the dynamically changing journalism, mastering new technologies and new ways of communication in the digital environment, which also generates new ethical problems.

Internet technologies have entered our lives so rapidly that people themselves did not notice how they plunged into digital reality. The COVID-19 pandemic has made this process irreversible. It is clear that online solutions will be more and more widely used in professional and personal spheres. This, of course, has advantages: with them, life has become more convenient, easier and more interesting, but the “back side” has also manifested itself: cyberbullying, negative or malicious content, the availability of personal data, etc., something that does not always fall under the actions of official regulatory authorities. Therefore, many people are concerned about the question: does the Internet environment need its own ethical standards that will make staying online comfortable and friendly? The modern youth already now lives in a mixed reality, combining different ethical systems that exist online and offline, using the capabilities of artificial intelligence, and they understand this perfectly. They not only consume content, but also create it, form the rules of communication themselves. For example, you can’t call strangers; you cannot use someone else’s content without a link, you need to mark the use of a filter on photos with filters, you cannot distribute fake messages (in many countries, including Kazakhstan, there is administrative and even criminal liability for this). The law obliges online platforms in Kazakhstan to remove “illegal content”, and if this requirement is not met, it gives the authorities the right to “restrict the activities” of the Internet platform. In China, false information spread on the internet will be blocked, and if it violates the law, some accounts will also be prohibited from speaking.

As for ethical issues, the Internet environment dictates a fairly strict policy in terms of security, privacy and social support. But at the same time, online mechanisms designed to control thinking and predict human behavior, including ethical rules. There have never been such instruments of influence on a person in the world. Journalism will always have to maintain its attachment to the truth, reinforced recently by the negative impact of the truth, the threatening way of life and thinking that we inherited from the vices cultivated in the twentieth cen-

tury by politicians and the population, for whom the goal was personal interests that justified the means. Deception was one of the tools, among other things, that offered its power and influence and plunged the world into the abyss of post-truth, which encroaches on the essence of the journalistic profession. There are elements in this post-truth era that make it one of the worst threats to professional journalism of our time. The phenomenon of fake news, which is actively spreading with the expansion of social networks and the development of technology on various platforms, forces journalists and citizens in general to take seriously the ethical standard of the profession of a journalist.

The digital world and digital journalism today need a revision of the laws, norms and ethics that would regulate them. For their harmonization, in particular in Kazakhstan, new laws, codes and rules are needed that will form the boundaries of what is permissible. The above actualizes the topic of this study.

**The purpose of this paper** is to study the concept of “international standards of journalism”, distinguish the problems of the implementation of international standards of journalism in the digital age, and highlight, based on the identification of current ethical problems, modern challenges facing journalism in the era of digitalization of the media space.

**The scientific novelty of the study** of international standards of journalism and the ethical regulation of digital journalism is due to the fact that digital journalism plays an increasingly important role in the modern information society. The study of international standards of journalism and the ethical regulation of digital journalism makes it possible to identify existing problems and shortcomings in this area, as well as to propose new approaches and solutions, focusing on the unique challenges that arise in the implementation of journalistic principles in the digital environment. Such challenges include, for example, the spread of disinformation and fake news, the violation of people’s privacy, digital following and its impact on journalistic practice.

In addition, the study of international standards and ethical regulation of digital journalism contributes to the formation of a single qualitative standard for new media. This is important in order to ensure public confidence in digital media and maintain a high level of professionalism of journalists.

**The practical significance of this research** lies in the fact that it provides an opportunity to analyze already conducted research on international standards and ethical principles of journalism in the dig-

ital age with new discoveries, based on the results of which a new strategy and methods for solving ethical dilemmas in the work of a journalist in the digital environment are being formulated.

### Research methods

The methodological basis in the process of solving the scientific component of the outlined topic was the works of Kazakhstani and foreign scientists who studied the problems of international ethical standards of journalism, the reliability of information in the mass media, the concept of fakes in the information space, etc. For the theoretical analysis of international standards of journalism, the study used traditional methods of comparison, analogy and generalization, which make it possible to reveal the essence of the concept of “international standards of journalism” in the most meaningful way. When working with the texts of the codes of professional ethics of a journalist, the method of content analysis was applied. The methodological basis chosen by the authors of the study of international standards of journalism is closely related to theoretical approaches and concepts that include theories of communication, sociology, political science and other scientific disciplines. This allowed us to provide a deep understanding of the problem area and formulate recommendations for improving the situation in this sphere.

### Literature review

The main theoretical basis of the study was the works of both Kazakhstani and foreign authors. Actually, there are a lot of works related specifically to the study of the interpretation and essence of the concept of “international standards of journalism”. In 2011, the work “International Standards and foreign practice of regulating journalism” of the researcher Richter was published, it was a textbook published as a UNESCO publication (Richter A. G., 2011). The work deals in some depth with such issues as international standards and national media regulation systems, access to information, state policy towards the media etc. In this tutorial, an entire chapter is devoted to the problem of Internet regulation. In particular, author wonders: “Is the Internet a mass media?”. The author writes that “With the development of new forms of information dissemination, the question arises about the applicability of the existing legal regulation for traditional media to the Internet. The Internet is a set of public telecom-

munication networks (telecommunication networks) united by a single technology for the production and dissemination of information. Following this definition and drawing an analogy, for example, with television, you can compare the Internet with a TV transmitter, a relay station and a TV in their technological totality, but not with a TV program. Lack of accessibility (mass character) The Internet and the frequency (updating) of distributed messages leads to the idea that it is premature to subordinate this sphere to the legal regime existing for the mass media” (Richter A. G., 2011: 231).

The work of scientists L.S. Akhmetova, A.V. Verevkin, T.Yu. Lifanov “UNESCO International Standards of Journalism in Kazakhstan: collection of scientific and methodological materials” is devoted to the problems of the development of international standards of journalism (Akhmetova L.S., 2019).

The study of Russian authors A. Baychik and Yu. Kuryshev – “International Standards of Professional Ethics of Journalists” is devoted to issues and standards of professional ethics of journalists on the example of ethical codes of the countries of the world (A.V. Baichik, Yu. V. Kurysheva, S. B. Nikonov, 2012). The work is a full-scale study and documents defining the ethical side of the development of journalism are systematized here in the form of textbook material. The first chapter is presented by the international principles of ethics, which have become the basis for the adoption of ethical codes in various states, the second chapter includes the texts of ethical codes of different countries. Each chapter contains a methodological explanation of how to conduct a comparative analysis of these documents.

Among foreign authors, Rodrigo Zamith’s recently published book “The international journalism handbook – concepts, challenges, and contexts” can be distinguished (Rodrigo Zamith, 2022). The book examines the modern fundamental problems of the development and functioning of the media, in particular the issues of media effects, cultural models of journalism, ethical issues, the importance of news today, issues of truth, bias, fragmentation of the audience, etc. In the author’s opinion, “international journalism is crucial for our understanding of the world beyond our own borders. This understanding is becoming increasingly important as modern societies are deeply interconnected. As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us, a country cannot completely isolate itself. And some of our most pressing problems (for example, climate change) are hardly limited to national borders. However, international

journalism is not only about events that begin outside our own borders. It is also a way to learn about how people in other parts of the world chronicle these events, make sense of what is happening and present information truthfully and clearly. In other words, it gives us an opportunity to imagine how journalists here at home could have a different attitude to their work (and perform it). This is a chance to realize that perhaps the ways in which journalism is carried out in one place could be enriched if some ingredients from another place were added to them. Conversely, it is also a chance to realize the pitfalls of adopting certain ideologies and practices” (Rodrigo Zamith, 2022:7). This book is intended to explain the key theories and concepts that will allow you to understand the general practice of journalism around the world, and illustrate some of the problems that arise when journalists work in these contexts.

Let’s turn to the interpretation of the concept of “international standards of journalism”. A review of the literature has shown that all interpretations of the concept are reduced to generally accepted journalistic ethical principles worldwide, including: impartiality, honesty, openness, accuracy, objectivity, respect for privacy, verification of information sources.

Journalistic ethics and standards are the ethical principles of professional journalism, and the “Code of honor”, which is formulated in various forms in media organizations and trade unions. Ethics is what distinguishes a professional journalist from a blogger or any other citizen engaged in journalism.

The field of ethics is the extent to which individuals can be trusted to comply with a voluntarily established law (Moulton, 1997). Although “ethics” may be a vague term, in the most general sense it is understood as the study of the foundations and principles of right and wrong behavior of people that determine how they should treat each other in the world of voluntary relationships (Sanders K., 2002). Modern philosophical usage usually divides ethics into theoretical and applied parts. The first is related to the epistemological status of ethical statements. The second is more practical and considers which examples of behavior are right or wrong and should be encouraged in society (Pattyn B., 2000). According to Florence van Baasbank (2021), “the relevance of modern journalistic ethics was noted already in the late 1800s and early 1900s, when the press underwent industrialization and mass development. Liberal hopes that a free, maximally liberated press would create a healthy market of ideas were dashed

by the appearance of a powerful mass commercial press. People questioned the ability of the unregulated press to form a rational opinion for the public good” (Florence van Baasbank, 2021).

The influence of the media on the life of society is closely related to the responsibility of journalists. At the same time, the professional community of journalists develops standards of behavior and determines the boundaries of what is permissible not at once, since this is a long and complex process.

The international standard states that ethical codes should be adopted on the initiative of the media themselves. Self-regulation is the basis of journalism and the media. Self-regulation of mass media makes state intervention unnecessary (Akhmetova L.S., 2019:60).

“The International Principles of Professional Ethics in Journalism were designed at consultative meetings of a number of international and regional organizations in the period from 1978 to 1983” (Source: Mezhdunarodnye principy professional’noj etiki v zhurnalistike – <https://nansmit.tj/20968-2/?id=>).

The well-known American media researcher D. McQuail highlighted the fundamental values that are spread by media institutions and provide them with power over society among them: freedom, equality of different points of view and sources of information and a sense of solidarity. (McQuail D., 2005).

According to G. Toralieva, “International standards of journalism are perceived negatively by many, because it is believed that they impose some conventions. We are talking about the imposition of Anglo-Saxon culture or Anglo-American tradition. However, regardless of whether we accept innovations or not, they nevertheless exist. That is, if there is a desire to become in demand in world journalism, you will have to meet the standards. Everyone in this particular case chooses for himself. International standards exist because they are in demand by readers all over the world. International online journalism has its own standards for writing articles. Many experienced and young professionals in the field of journalism say that such standards do not exist. However, it should be emphasized that in this case we are talking about online journalism. The standards imply special rules for the publication of articles and basic ethical standards that a journalist who has chosen a virtual environment for his work should adhere to” (Gulnura Toralieva, 2006).

The creation of journalistic codes is based on general ethical principles. In general, it can be noted that the ethical codes of journalists around the

world are universal, and “the media must do their work in accordance with the following ethical principles: truth, objectivity, justice, prevention of defamation, respect for public decency, respect for privacy, prevention of plagiarism, respect for ethnicity, prevention of violence, indication of the source information, prevention of lies and falsification, observance of impartiality, and paying attention to the correct choice of words and images” (Sedigheh Babrana, Mahboubeh Ataherian, 2019).

According to J. Seppos, A.S. Hayes and J.B. Singer, in the digital environment, “old assumptions about journalistic roles and values can no longer be perceived uncritically” (Ceppos J., Hayes A.S., Singer J.B., 2007).

We agree with the opinion of the Kyrgyz researcher G. Toralieva that “international standards of online journalism, implying certain ethical and professional norms, as well as genre originality and structure of materials, are today a general guide for journalists from all over the world. This strategy allows local journalists to write articles that are understandable to a foreign reader who does not have the ability to track events in any particular country” (Gulnura Toralieva, 2006).

Speaking about the international standards of journalism, in our opinion, we are talking about the quality standards of modern journalism, the importance of compliance with ethical standards that organically complement the standards of information quality.

## Discussion and results

In Kazakhstan, the principles of professional ethics of journalists have been developed on the basis of international principles of ethics as a source for creating a code of ethics at the national level. In addition, a law regulating the professional activities of journalists has been adopted at the state level in Kazakhstan, and responsibility for violations in this area is also indicated in it. Initially, the Law of Kazakhstan “On mass means of information” (Russian – СМИ) was put into effect in 1999. Today, amendments to the Law “On Mass Media” are being considered. This document is also about changing the wording of “mass means of information”, since mass media include mass means of information, online publications and Internet resources. In fact, the law covers the entire Internet space. The document itself, which is currently being considered in parliament, is aimed at improving the status of journalists. It should be noted that the new Law complies

with Kazakhstan's realities and European standards. Conducted within the framework of the European Union project "International Media Standards and National legislation", showed that the domestic legal field in the field of media is constantly developing in line with international standards. The mass media, which activities cover all spheres of public life, are a serious institution on which the worldview of citizens, consent in society also depend to a certain extent. In general, the legislation concerning the Kazakh media complies with generally accepted international principles – Kazakhstan has joined many international treaties regulating, among other things, issues of the right to freedom of speech and media activities. (Raushan Shulembayeva. Law and the Media: in line with international standards – [https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc\\_id=30978201](https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30978201)).

The first journalistic Code of ethics was adopted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors in

1923. The "Code of Ethics of a Journalist" in Kazakhstan was adopted at a joint meeting of the Board of the Union of Journalists of Kazakhstan and the Club of Editors-in-Chief on October 30, 2012. It establishes moral and ethical principles and norms of professional activity of a journalist and an employee of the mass media of Kazakhstan, the violation of which does not entail criminal, administrative or other liability, but they must be observed both in the interests of the whole society and for the benefit of each citizen individually.

Like many other similar documents, the Code speaks of professional duty, social responsibility, honesty and impartiality, reliability and objectivity, respect for private life, etc.

In fact, each country has its own ethical codes regulating the activities of media workers, although the essence of many such documents is similar, but there are differences.

**Table 1** – Principles of ethics of the countries of the world

European Union	Th USA	Scandinavian countries	African countries	Kazakhstan
Freedom of speech	Freedom of speech	Freedom of speech	Freedom of speech	Freedom of speech
Independence	Independence	Independence	Independence	Avoiding insults
Truth	Truth	Truth	Avoiding cruelty	Truth
Objectivity	Objectivity	Objectivity	Objectivity	Objectivity
Social responsibility	Social responsibility	Social responsibility	Social responsibility	Honesty
Accuracy	Independence	Accuracy	Accuracy	Accuracy
Protection of dignity	Protection of dignity	Avoid slander	Protection of dignity	Protection of honor and dignity
Respect for other ethnic groups	Respect for other ethnic groups	Respect for other ethnic groups	Respect for other ethnic groups	Respect for other ethnic groups

In China, the government takes media activities very seriously and even harshly. Journalists are required to strictly distinguish between their editorial and business operations to prevent any violation of the principle of fairness in news reporting. According to Chinese researchers, in the context of digitalization, modern Chinese society has become more open, but at the same time conditions are being created for ethical problems (Wang Fan, 2022). Distortions in the minds of many citizens of the country of the concepts of ethics, morality and morality, which became the basis for the adoption of a special law "On Cybersecurity of the People's Republic of China", which came into force in 2017. It contains a strict restriction on the violation of the rights of an individual to privacy and personal information: "No individual or organization can steal or other-

wise obtain personal information in an illegal way, and cannot illegally sell or illegally provide personal information to others" (Source: Chinese Cybersecurity Law. URL: [http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/xinwen/2016-11/07/content\\_2001605.htm](http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/xinwen/2016-11/07/content_2001605.htm) (in Chinese)).

However, the implementation of the law does not prohibit the sale and purchase of personal information on social networks. Such behavior, which does not require significant costs and can be quickly rewarded, is still actively implemented on social media platforms, although the regulatory framework in China is tightening every year.

Ethical standards organically complement the standards of information quality, which any self-respecting editorial staff should also have. For example, in 2020 when a crime against the sexual integrity of a child occurred in Satpayev (a small

town in Kazakhstan), a photo of the girl was posted on the Internet. Such actions are prohibited by Law, but some media outlets made a decision to break the rules and ethical standards, citing that others posted before despite the fact that it is not recommended to report unnecessary details about victims or people who have committed certain crimes. Another ethical dilemma is the publication of photographs or videos of corpses in the media – it's not so much about public and private media, but, first of all, about social networks and Instagram. For some media, publishing photos of corpses is not uncommon. For example, in order to demonstrate the scale of the tragedy in the Gaza Strip, many Instagram channels openly post photos of dead children. On December 22, 2023, an accident occurred in Almaty, Kazakhstan, when a bus drove at speed into a crowd of people at a public transport stop. Three people were killed, and photos of the bodies of the dead without censorship were replicated by many Internet resources. Publishing such kind of content is an important ethical issue, but whether or not to publish such photos or videos is up to the editorial board or the author of the material (if it is, for example, about an Instagram or Telegram channel) to decide for themselves. It should be noted that posting content with scenes of violence and cruelty on YouTube, which may cause shock to viewers, is prohibited.

Today, online publications and new media are the most operational, free from censorship, often from external interference and pressure from state institutions, information platforms. It is these media platforms, where professional editorial teams with significant work experience work, carry out social contact independent of state structures, politicians or officials, and strive to establish communication between fellow citizens. Internet journalism is certainly the most democratic in the sense that it gives an opportunity for a professional reporter to speak out and leave a comment to an ordinary reader at the same time. The exchange of opinions in author's and social media with well-known politicians and public figures contributes to the formation of the basis of balanced public thought, constantly creating a kind of virtual world in which the ethical category of choice reigns, which allows us to talk about the possibility and necessity of social communication. It is in the field of Internet journalism as the most popular that young generation journalists have directed their efforts, who, relying on the long-term experience of senior colleagues, offer original innovations, in particular in genre reproduction, independent analysis and creativity. Modern journalists, using the capa-

bilities of online journalism, expand the boundaries of investigations, analysts (longread), interviews, hold interactive press conferences with spontaneous involvement of users, and therefore create new forms, ideas, and introduce advanced methods.

We agree with the opinion of the Russian authors Kolosova A.A. and Schneider A.A. that “in the new technological conditions of the development of the digital environment, journalism is in the process of significant transformation” (Kolosova A.A., Schneider A.A., 2016). It is not only about the transformation of the process of collecting, producing and distributing information by modern media, the need to specify the concept of “international standards of journalism in the digital environment”, modification of ethical codes and Media Laws, but also about a bidirectional process where every user of the global network can become a potential author. It's no secret that for a long time there have been discussions among both journalists and researchers about whether the blogosphere can be considered part of journalism. And if earlier the main difference was that journalists, unlike bloggers, follow (or ideally should follow) generally accepted international and domestic standards of journalism or professional media community. However, today it should be noted that bloggers have long gone beyond the creators and distributors of media products – today you can find many YouTube channels, telegram channels, etc. on the Internet, where former and current journalists and bloggers offer their vision of current events of domestic and international importance.

Informatization basically contains the most diverse trends of our time, in particular computerization, electronization, digitalization. The term “digitalization” does not have an unambiguous definition, but it clearly identifies 2 main aspects: digitalization as a technological process (creation of platforms, big-data systems, networking, creation of smart techno systems and artificial intelligence systems, etc.) and digitalization as a social process associated with virtualization of heterotopic communicative spaces, total mediatization, blurring the boundaries of private and public. The main blocks of ethical problems are formed: ethical problems of the development of digital technologies and ethical problems of the dissemination of these technologies and their inclusion as a material basis for social creativity through the use of these technologies in various social practices. The first block of ethical problems of an applied nature is mainly built around the following issues: the introduction and limitation of certain ethical principles in the standards for the



development of robotics and artificial intelligence systems. In this area, the development of an ethical examination procedure and the creation of the foundations for such an examination, such as, for example, the development of codes for the use of artificial intelligence and their evaluation by the expert community, is identified as a priority task. These principles provide for the expansion of the understanding of the ethical beyond the sphere of “man-man” and the transfer of the concept of the ethical into the sphere of human interaction with the “non-human”. To date, research in the field of information and communication technologies is carried out in the following areas: computer ethics, virtual ethics, network ethics (cyber ethics).

Digitalization has become a fundamental tool for the development of society. In the field of journalism, its importance is so great that the attitude towards this profession has changed. Without ethics, information turns into disinformation and manipulation, which is typical of a sphere in which actors can be confused if it is not clear what the role of each of them is in this new scenario.

The new digital era is full of opportunities that allow people to grow both personally and professionally. However, in addition to the positive aspects, it also has negative ones that can harm them. In the case of journalism, the trend towards digitization is obvious, but if used incorrectly, it can become dangerous. In the Internet space, thanks to the accessibility and interactivity of modern information technologies, as well as the opportunity for everyone to express their opinion – sometimes biased and incompetent, one can observe an unprecedented weakening of moral and ethical norms. Images in comments, the functioning of public sites with discriminatory content, the spread of popularizing gender, age, ethnic stereotypes and prejudices – today has become a common phenomenon. Media texts in this case, due to the fixation of abnormalities, can normalize these violations, make them habitual and imprint them in social memory.

When creating and editing media texts, it is necessary to identify vulnerable groups of the population, unethically presented information about which harms the assertion of universal principles of tolerance, kindness, respect, justice. For example, in the case of sexual violence, it is unacceptable to describe the incident in detail, name names and publish information that will remind the victim of the shame and pain experienced. Ethical norms are regulated by a system of rules and moral norms functioning in society. It follows that editors, as well as

public organizations and professional associations, have a huge responsibility in the field of monitoring the ethical norms of editing media texts. In order to prevent ethical violations, not to harm a person, the editor must understand sensitive topics and vulnerable social groups.

Today it is important to find a solution that will meet the needs associated with digitalization, and it is quite difficult to single out the ethical parameters that the profession of a journalist requires. In order not to cause confusion among the public, the reliability of information requires the author’s attention to detail and optimal data verification. Modern journalist, striving to be the best of the best and the first of the first, trying to maximize the opportunity to reach a large audience, forgets about the most important rules of the profession – the truthfulness of information. Although humanity lives live in a reality where speed is a mandatory requirement, the quality of information should not fade into the background, not to mention its incorrect transmission.

With the development of social networks and messengers, the problem of fake news and its impact on public opinion has become one of the key problems of modern journalism. Despite the fact that fake news issues are not new, in the digital age this problem has become especially relevant due to the wide access to information and the ability to quickly spread news through social networks and online platforms. In December 2023, the public of Kazakhstan was stirred up by the scandal surrounding the so-called “Aika’s List” posted on the Internet. This list is a list of secured clients of highly paid escort girls in Almaty, indicating their personal data and prices for sex services. It is noted that the compromising material was partially published by anonymous authors, which is why disputes broke out in social networks about the reliability of the information. It should be noted that in Kazakhstan, criminal liability is provided for the dissemination of confidential data under Article 147 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan (“Violation of privacy and the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan on personal data and their protection”) (Source: «Spisok Ajki», ili Kto stoit za utechkoj informacii intimnogo haraktera v Seti?» – <https://orda.kz/spisok-ajki-ili-kto-stoit-za-utechkoj-informacii-intimnogo-harakter-a-v-seti-380134/>).

Today, fake news poses a serious threat to the principles of ethics and can destroy the credibility of journalism in general. Against the background of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as well as the war in Ukraine, disinformation and fake stuffing have be-

come a constant phenomenon in the media space (especially on the Internet). In 2019 and 2021, Internews conducted a study that touched on the topics of media literacy and media consumption in Kazakhstan. The results showed that the majority of respondents from Kazakhstan receive information from social networks and Internet sites, and 30% of respondents learn the news through television. At the same time, in comparison with 2019, the share of information sources decreased across all channels except social networks. For example, in 2021, the consumption of information through television decreased by half... Most of the respondents, namely 58.1%, trust television, Internet sites are in second place, the trust of respondents in information from

social networks, forums and blogs is the lowest. At the same time, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp are the most trusted among social networks (Source: Yuna Korosteleva. «Nashi grazhdane dazhe ne osoznayut, chto oni zhertvy propagandy». Kak Kazakhstan mozhet borot'sya s rossijskoj propagandoj – <https://vlast.kz/politika/52046-nasi-grazhdane-dazhe-ne-osoznaut-cto-oni-zertvy-propagandy.html>).

Research on the problem of fake news and analysis of the compliance of international journalism standards with the realities of the digital age can help identify effective measures to combat fakes and protect the interests of society. Let's look at how fakes contradict international standards of journalism.

**Table 2** – The problem of fakes and their inconsistencies with international standards of journalism

<b>The problem of fakes in journalism</b>	<b>International standards of journalism</b>
Spreading false information	The obligation to provide truthful information
Distortion of facts and events	Principles of neutrality and objectivity
Insufficient fact checking	The principle of professional responsibility and the obligation to verify facts
Lack of balance and bias	The principle of fairness and balance in reflecting events
Violation of confidentiality of information sources	The principle of protection of information sources
Lack of transparency in the work	Principles of openness and access to information
Insufficient care for people's feelings and dignity	The principle of respect for human dignity

This table is a summary of the main problems associated with fake information in journalism and the relevant international standards aimed at solving them. These international standards and codes of ethics for journalism may include additional provisions and principles. Thus, the problem of applying international standards of journalism in the digital age is an urgent and complex problem of the modern media space. With the development of network technologies and the spread of digital platforms, journalism is experiencing serious challenges related to maintaining ethical standards and the quality of information content.

Who is a real journalist of our time? Today, if you focus on the people who are charged with transmitting and collecting information, thanks to digital trends, this role loses its meaning in the face of the huge number of citizen journalists who work in social networks today. The unreliability that journalists are now receiving is overshadowed by this new news format, in which it is believed that everyone can report something of their own. These are two big problems that largely affect journalism and in many cases cause neglect of this profession or even

consider it something easy to perform. The reality is that, despite the availability of these new tools, you cannot lose the professionalism that every role deserves, and that quality work should exceed those opportunities, no matter how tempting they may seem.

Journalism today is carried out both in real and virtual communities. The ability to use the opportunities of interaction with the public is important to achieve not only the goal of informing, but also communication. It is important to take into account reality, but including the part of it that is a reaction to the information of the citizens themselves. Thus, a journalist can greatly benefit from this interactive communication. Journalism today is based on interactivity and mutual cooperation, because the ability to listen will help you learn how to correctly, accurately inform the population, delivering truthful and necessary information.

But this result cannot be achieved without due professional diligence based on fact-checking, multiple versions of stakeholders and rigor in order to avoid interpretations that may offer a biased view of reality. Thus, the role of a journalist in covering only

what he knows, and not in becoming a representative of news that he does not know about, is one of the basic requirements of quality journalism.

### Conclusion

Digitalization has changed the way journalism is conducted, but one constant remains: the need for a strong journalistic ethic. A journalist needs to be someone who can be trusted, and this can be a daunting task, especially in the digital age. This obstacle, although it may seem simple, is more complicated due to external pressure and constant ethical dilemmas. What are the responsibilities of a journalist in the digital age? In an era when the business model of journalism has changed and trust in the media has been undermined, it is vital that journalists take care of the profession and strengthen trust. The correspondence between what is published and what is demonstrated is crucial in order to be a trustworthy journalist.

In modern times, in the era of globalization, computerization, the “global village”, the mass media and the inextricably linked activities of journalists have become an important element of public life. Journalists are directly responsible for the accuracy of the transmission of information, the objectivity of the media discourse and the content. The role of a journalist is to inform the recipient about facts, things, events or processes occurring beyond the reach of the recipient. A characteristic feature of modern times and modern mass media is the universality and ease of access to information.

Ethics absorbs the results of the search for the meaning of a person’s life, defines values and fits the goals of actions into a broader axiological structure. Today, journalistic ethics, that is, all norms of behavior of a journalist in relation to the recipient, can be an element of information ethics, or, more narrowly, ethics of information security.

The commitment of information companies and journalists to international standards of journalism and ethics is crucial. However, journalistic self-regulation does not apply only to the media and journalists. In order for all this to bring effective and useful

results, the active participation of the scientific community, non-governmental organizations and the State is also required. All of them bear responsibility for maintaining ethical and professional criteria for the benefit of society.

In this context, in order to stimulate journalistic self-regulation in Kazakhstan, authors of this paper propose the next:

- Inclusion of ethics and values subjects in the curricula, starting from primary and secondary schools, as well as subjects related to media literacy – reading and analysis of media content in order to form a critical audience.

- Adoption and observance of ethical codes, principles of protection of the interests of the audience and editorial boards by each of the mass media in the country.

- Strengthening ties with academic circles and civil society organizations, both domestic and foreign, as well as with international organizations involved in the protection and professionalization of journalists.

- Encouraging research, reflection, discussion in the field of ethical and legal responsibility of the mass media in the country.

- Elimination of legal nihilism among journalists by conducting legal trainings and master classes on fact-checking.

- Support for the professionalization of journalists in order to promote the formation of new generations of journalists who adhere to ethical standards in the digital era and feel social responsibility.

So, the essence of professional standards of journalists lies in truthful, unbiased and timely information provided. The modern audience needs exactly the truthful and timely information. Otherwise, the media shows disrespect for those who depend on journalistic work.

And, unfortunately, it will continue to get worse if journalists neglect international media standards. The standards of journalism are in principle diverse in forms, they are the same in essence: loyalty to the basics of the profession, concern for the safety of the audience, accuracy, truthfulness, impartiality. And awareness is security.

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