# PUBLIC SECURITY COMMUNICATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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***Abstract.*** *The topic of public security communication opportunities and challenges in social media is relevant, because social media help to spread information faster and communicate with that part of society that uses and follows information in social media. As a result, these media become a strategic communication tool for public security institutions, disseminating relevant information and strengthening the responsibility and transparency of institutions in communication with the public. This communication depends not only on technological capabilities, but also on the ability to combine legal, ethical and professional principles, because only in this way can it be ensured that public security communication in social media would be a sustainable tool for institutions to strengthen public trust in them. Therefore, the object of the study is public security communication in social media, and the goal is to analyze the opportunities and challenges of public security communication in social media.*

*After reviewing the scientific literature and conducting research, it can be noted that the communication of public security institutions is very important, because in this way the sense of public security and trust is ensured, and social media constitute an important medium for the rapid dissemination of information. Although the public sees and evaluates this communication positively, institutions face significant challenges when communicating via social media – disinformation, lack of resources and time, limitations of algorithms. In order to ensure public security more effectively, consistent communication, communication formats that meet the needs of the public, and targeted work to combat misleading information are necessary.*

*The quantitative data on public security communication in social media suggests that both the public and public security institution representatives recognize the significance and potential of these platforms, yet their assessments diverge in several respects. The public generally evaluates institutional communication positively— most respondents find it useful and trustworthy—while also emphasizing that institutions should post more content. In contrast, representatives of public security institutions highlight different core difficulties, including limited resources and time, the need to address misinformation, and reduced reach caused by platform algorithms. The comparison also indicates that the communication formats currently used by institutions across various social media channels do not fully align with societal expectations, which implies that the opportunities offered by social media are not being utilized to their full extent in this field. To improve the situation, communication should be better tailored to public needs and the practical possibilities available.*

***Keywords:*** *public security, communication, social media, society.*

## Introduction

Ensuring public security is one of the most important functions of the state, helping institutions to ensure public welfare, stability, and trust in the institutions themselves. In order to properly perform this function, it is very important to know how to communicate with the public. In today's information society, effective communication between state institutions and civilians on social media is becoming a strategic tool. Communication on social media allows public security institutions to reach large audiences more quickly and disseminate relevant information urgently, but at the same time poses a number of challenges: the rapid flow of

information, the threat of disinformation, and public criticism require efficiency, professionalism, and caution. Effective communication can strengthen public trust, while improper implementation can undermine it. Therefore, these media are becoming a strategic communication tool for public security institutions, disseminating relevant information and strengthening the accountability and transparency of institutions in their communication with the public. This communication depends not only on technological capabilities, but also on the ability to balance legal, ethical, and professional principles, as this is the only way to ensure that public security communication on social media is a sustainable tool for institutions to strengthen public trust in them.

Communication on social media is frequently discussed in scientific literature. In general terms, communication is analyzed more broadly by V. Navickienė et al. (2023). The theoretical basis of media and their use in law enforcement agencies is analyzed by Nigel G. Fielding (2023). The document "Guidelines for Communication about Services Provided by Public Sector Institutions and Customer Service" by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania discusses the basic principles of communication, limits, and ethical guidelines for using social media. However, no information or specific examples of public security communication on social media and their opportunities and challenges have been provided to date. There is a lack of specific analysis and systematic analysis of how to use social media effectively to provide information and strengthen trust between institutions and the public.

With this in mind, the **object** of the research is public security communication on social media. The **aim** is to analyze the opportunities and challenges of public security communication on social media.

To achieve this aim, the following research **tasks** are formulated:

1. To discuss the theoretical aspects of public security communication.

2. To analyze the role of social media in contemporary public security communication.

3. Collect and compare quantitative data on the attitudes of the public and public security institutions' communication representatives towards communication on social media.

The research **problem** is that although social networks provide public security institutions with the opportunity to communicate with the public much more effectively, the question remains how to turn these opportunities into a real effective tool, while managing the challenges that arise.

Research **methodology**. The research was conducted using an analytical method applied to the analysis of scientific sources. The social network content analysis method was also used to analyze the posts on the social network accounts of official public security institutions. The questionnaire survey method helped to reveal how certain groups of people perceive communication through social media.

## The concept of public security

A safe environment is one in which human rights and freedoms are upheld. A sense of security determines the behavior and quality of life of individuals, as well as the social and political stability of the state and the trust of its citizens in its legal and institutional mechanisms (Tumalavičius, 2017). Alfonsas Laurinavičius (2001) argues that creating a safe environment is the main focus of police activity and policy, which should be directed towards helping people to create a safe environment by promoting mutual trust and thus forming the view that a sense of security is one of the greatest human values. Public security is part of national security, which includes: public order, internal service, fire and civil protection and rescue operations, state border protection, the circulation of weapons, ammunition, explosives, and special means, and

the protection of persons with protected person status (Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, 2023). This means that public security plays an important role in society. This is confirmed by the provisions of Lithuanian law. The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania stipulates that the state is responsible for ensuring the security of its citizens, therefore the area of public security is an integral part of the implementation of constitutional rights and freedoms. The National Security Strategy states that in order to ensure public security, it is necessary to maintain public security, economic and social stability, ensure environmental protection, and develop capabilities to respond to external and internal risk factors, dangers, and threats. The strategy also notes that an effective public security system is essential for internal security and prosperity.

Public security and its proper enforcement depend on several factors. First, effective public security requires the proper establishment of human rights and freedoms in the state (Tumalavičius, 2017). Only in a secure state can human rights such as the right to life, health, a safe environment, etc. be properly guaranteed and protected. These provisions are implemented by a system of public security institutions: policy makers and coordinators, institutional services such as the police, fire and rescue services, border guards, and supervisory and control bodies (courts, ombudsman institutions, etc.). Secondly, the process of ensuring public security may also give rise to unlawful restrictions and violations of human rights and freedoms. For this reason, it is important to enshrine the principle of proportionality of public security measures in the legislative process and to create the necessary mechanisms for the protection of human rights and freedoms. Ultimately, effective public security is determined by the proper application of the law—how public administration entities carry out their duties and powers, which they must perform properly and without violating legal norms (Tumalavičius, 2017).

Thus, public security in Lithuania is a necessary condition for a safe environment in which human rights and freedoms are effectively implemented. it is part of national security, covering public order, civil and fire security, rescue operations, border protection, and control of special measures. The Constitution obliges the state to ensure the security of its citizens, therefore the field of public security operates on a legal basis (from human rights standards to basic laws and subordinate legislation). In practice, all institutions need consistent, ethical, and coordinated communication (including social media), as it directly affects the behavior of the population, trust, and the effectiveness of crisis management.

**The role of social media communication**

A large part of contemporary communication and media theory originates from the general social sciences, including history, anthropology, economics, psychology, and sociology, which emerged in Western Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (McQuail, 2005). Scientists describe communication as a term in their works in very different ways; there is no single defined opinion on how the concept itself should sound. In the context of public security, communication can be understood as the targeted transmission of information from institutions to the public in order to ensure a sense of security, respond quickly to threats, and strengthen public confidence in public security institutions. It is emphasized that communication is the foundation of an organization: it ensures common patterns of behavior and allows for the development of ethics, law, and general social order. Thus, communication is more than just the transfer of information—it is a set of relationships in which signs, language, codes, and social rules ensure social harmony and the individual's belonging to the social organism.

Informing the public is a responsible public communication activity, planned and carried out in accordance with the principles of legality, accuracy, timeliness, proportionality, and ethics. The goal of the communication process is to provide verified information in a timely and clear manner, which would help protect lives and property, thereby maintaining order, reducing risks, and strengthening public confidence in state institutions so that the public feels safe in their environment. In practice, this means analyzing audiences and risks and adapting clear messages and information (message map) (Covello, 2006). This approach helps to attract the audience's attention by providing accurately formulated and relevant information.

Social media play a significant role in people's lives, as individuals use these media to communicate, share information, and build communities. The social network itself is a means of communication within the platform, allowing users to freely communicate and reach large audiences, establishing connections with them. The effectiveness of messages depends on proper preparation (clear policies, templates), clear updates with clearly marked corrections, and the very important aspect of partnership with the media and other important state institutions. When disseminating public security information, it is important to use hashtags (messages marked with a specific topic on social media) and geotags (messages marking a location) (e.g., # Flood_Kaunas), as they allow you to reach your target audience more quickly (Young et al., 2020). Strategic use of hashtags can help filter content during extreme situations (Silver, Andrey, 2019). The role of social media as a communication infrastructure is detailed in the CWA 18005:2023 guidelines. They state that in order to achieve the desired result: the headlines of the warnings must consistently indicate the type and intensity of the threat, as well as the type of message itself (e.g., new warning/update) and a clear plan of action on what to do in that situation ("Prepare to leave" or "Evacuate now") ; the message should include a visual plan to attract more attention, provide the necessary contacts who can provide information or assistance; provide information in several languages, if possible; use pre-prepared message templates and visual consistency. Such a standardized format is necessary in order to guide people's behavior in a targeted and rapid manner during crises or extreme situations (CWA 18005:2023). Social media should complement, not replace, official public warning systems (OASIS, 2010).

Communication via social media and in crisis situations is a relevant phenomenon, as government institutions can monitor how individuals receive certain information, and social network participants can also provide important information when addressing necessary issues (Wang et al., 2021). Studies show that during unexpected crises, the public tends to rely more on real-time information posted on social media than to wait for reports from traditional media (Bonson et al., 2015). It's also pointed out that social network analysis makes it possible to model public behavior in a crisis environment based on user posts, reactions, and interactions. This only confirms that the development of targeted communication on social media provides greater accessibility and wider dissemination of information. In crisis situations, videos, maps, infographics, and other types of visual material (Ling et al., 2015), which attract users' attention more than long informational texts. This material can be prepared in advance so that it can be shared as soon as it becomes relevant during a disaster (Young et al., 2020), thus avoiding additional work during a crisis and speeding up the process of informing users. The network of social media followers should be improved every day so that in the event of a disaster, it becomes an effective tool for disseminating information (Olson et al., 2019). Such a pre-formed audience ensures that important information reaches as many people as possible during a crisis, as a timely message can have a direct impact on people's security.

Therefore, communication as a process should be considered one of the most important factors in the socialization of modern society. That is why it is important to establish appropriate

relations with the public in public security communication, without applying pressure or hostility, but rather attempting to establish empathetic relations. Social network communication is the totality of connections between people or organizations, and social media/platforms are the digital environment in which these connections become visible, supported, and expanded.

**Social media communication opportunities and challenges for public security**

In today's world, communication on social media has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it provides public security communication with the opportunity to reach users quickly and effectively, facilitating the exchange of information. On the other hand, it is a very easy medium in which misinformation, propaganda (Vosoughi et al., 2018), and negative opinions spread quickly, Therefore, it is very important to increase resistance to negative information and teach people how to recognize lies. It is not always easy to adapt to a specific audience, as each social network participant has their own attitudes and opinions, so it is not easy to teach them to trust only official sources. Empirical studies show that a small proportion of messages become extremely popular, often characterised by great structural diversity, and can have a significant impact on public reactions, but these reactions are not always positive and can cause panic among consumers or social chaos (Calo et al., 2021). Therefore, when performing public security functions, it is important to learn how to implement them properly, what should be improved or changed so that public security meets all the necessary criteria and does not cause anxiety among consumers. In addition, methods that help to quickly deal with emerging problems should be continuously improved.

One of the biggest challenges is the spread of disinformation on social media, which distorts risk perception, undermines the reputation of institutions, and weakens public trust. Misinformation itself usually takes the form of a multifaceted campaign with a predetermined financial, political, or other goal. Such campaigns are particularly conducive to the social media environment, where misleading messages spread quickly, attract people's attention, and increase the activity of such dissemination. In the digital ecosystem, disinformation is defined as the deliberate dissemination of inaccuracies or distortions, often presented as news, in order to achieve political goals. W. Lance Bennett and Steven Livingston link this phenomenon to the erosion of institutional legitimacy (2021). The spread of disinformation is intensifying in a hybrid media system, where popular social media topics and artificially inflated stories are transferred to traditional media, thus expanding the audience for misleading content.

When performing public security functions and monitoring order on social media, it is important not only to monitor and moderate content, but also to analyze how and who promotes the spread of disinformation and to combat its spread. Combating disinformation means identifying misleading messages and responding to them (Calo et al., 2021). One could imagine that an artificial intelligence system could help flag questionable content or that legislation could define disinformation, but this is not a mechanism for combating it. An effective response requires identifying the actors and their motives – ranging from unintentional misinformation to strategically planned operations. Early detection of disinformation is crucial to minimising damage and consequences (Shu et al., 2020).

Another particularly serious problem is cyber attacks related to social media. Such attacks pose a structural risk to public security communications in Lithuania, as they can compromise the integrity of official accounts by damaging, destroying, deleting, or altering electronic information, as well as promoting the spread of misleading messages and undermining public confidence in public security institutions. The National Cyber Security Centre (NKSC) recorded 3,874 incidents in 2024, about 63% more than in 2023, which indicates a problem area

that needs more attention. Based on this, it can be assumed that attacks against official government accounts and communication channels on social media will be carried out in the future. Therefore, the prevention of information dissemination should be strengthened, incident policy procedures should be clearly described, and the knowledge of employees who work with social network communication should be enhanced.

As mentioned earlier, communication on social media not only poses challenges but also provides opportunities to communicate with users more quickly. Public security institutions also use social media as an opportunity to search for missing persons. They share all the necessary information about missing persons on their official accounts to make it easier to find them, because with the help of the public, the circumstances surrounding missing persons are sometimes revealed more quickly than through institutional cooperation alone. Another opportunity provided by social media is the prevention of criminal offenses or administrative violations in cyberspace. This prevention is ensured by a public virtual patrol, whose functions include the prevention of criminal offenses and administrative violations in cyberspace, monitoring of social media, evaluation of information received and collection of additional information, as well as active preventive activities and informing people about various relevant topics related to the prevention of violations of the law in cyberspace. This is an excellent way to regulate and ensure public security on social media and a great opportunity to strengthen public security communication.

It can therefore be said that social media are becoming not only part of public security communication, which enables public security institutions to disseminate information quickly and effectively, engage the public, and strengthen trust in state institutions. However, these opportunities are accompanied by significant challenges, such as disinformation and cyberattacks. In order to manage these risks, it is necessary to develop strategic communication, educate the public to be resistant to false information, and promote critical thinking and trust in official sources.

## Survey of communication representatives of public and state institutions

A quantitative research method was chosen for the study – a survey that allows for the collection of summary data from two target groups: members of the public and communication representatives of public security institutions. The research tool consists of two questionnaires, containing 19 and 17 questions, respectively. The questionnaire questions were developed based on the theoretical principles of public security communication and social media use. The questionnaire was designed to assess respondents' social network usage habits and attitudes toward public security agency communication.

## Public attitudes towards public security communication on social media

A total of 122 respondents participated in the public survey. The majority were women (69.7%), while men accounted for 30.3%. In terms of age, the majority of survey participants were 16–24 years old (44.3%), followed by those aged 25–34 (23.8%) and those aged 45 and older (22.1%), and the smallest group was 35–44 years old (9.8%).

The results of the public survey show that respondents actively use various social networking platforms, but there are three main ones. Most of the respondents use *Facebook* at least once a week – as many as 95.9% of respondents. *YouTube* ranks second in terms of usage – 78.7%, and *Instagram* ranks third – 71.3%. Almost half of the respondents (45.1%) use *TikTok*, while only 9% of respondents use *Telegram*. Other platforms mentioned account for a

small percentage, only 0.8% each. This data shows that it is most effective for public security institutions to communicate on the platforms with the largest audience, primarily *Facebook*, *Instagram*, and *YouTube*. There is also a noticeable increase in the use of *TikTok*, which indicates new opportunities to reach broader groups of the population.
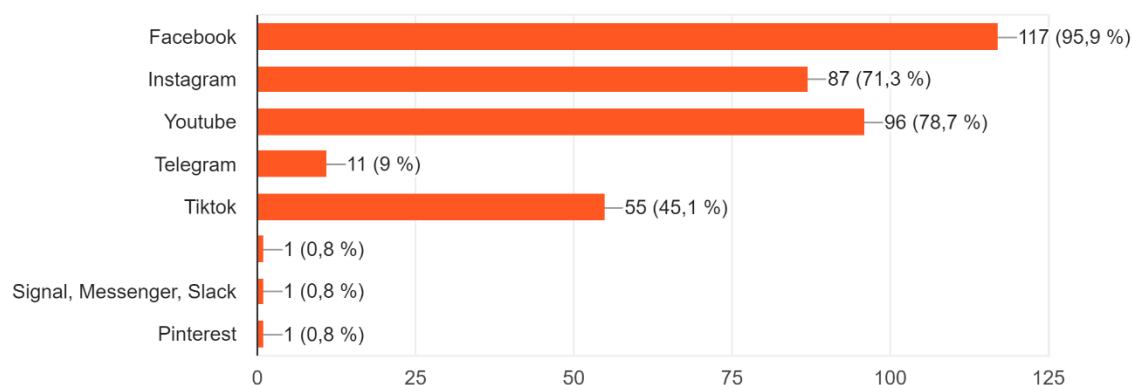


**Fig. 1. Platforms used by the public**

When asked which public security institutions respondents follow on social media, it appears that the Police Department's account is the most actively followed, with 36.9% of respondents. Other institutions have lower visibility: the State Border Guard Service is followed by 10.7%, the Fire and Rescue Service is followed by 12.3%, the Public Security Service by 14.8%, and the Financial Crime Investigation Service by only 4.9% of respondents. However, the majority of respondents (54.1%) indicated that they do not follow any public security institutions on social media. These results show that more than half of the residents who participated in the survey do not have access to public security communication on social media in general. This may be related to a lack of information dissemination and public distrust of institutions and their activities. It can also be said that police communication is the most accessible and visible.
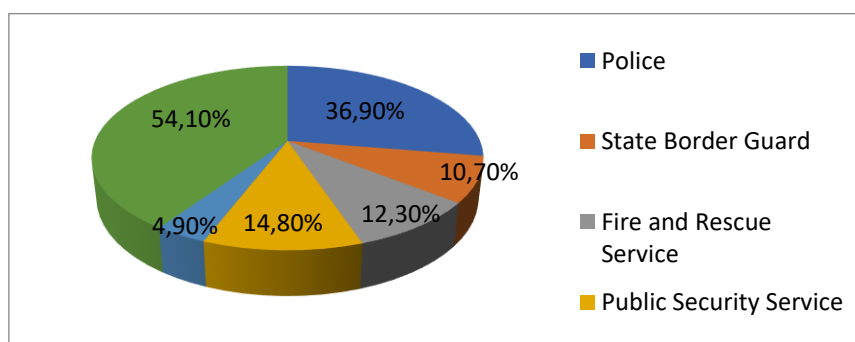


**Fig. 2. Public security institutions followed by respondents on social media.**

The responses provided by respondents regarding their trust in information provided by public security institutions show that public trust is moderate. Most respondents (33.6%) chose a medium level of trust, 27% indicated that they were fairly confident, and 29.5% were very confident. A small proportion of respondents (7.4%) chose 1 point and (2.5%) chose 2 points.

Summarizing the results, it can be said that more than half of the respondents (56.5%) consider the information provided by institutions to be reliable or very reliable, while only 9.9% showed a lower level of trust. This shows that public security institutions enjoy greater public trust, which is important for effective communication in crisis and everyday situations, but part of the public still lacks complete confidence in the reliability of information. It is therefore important to continue to strengthen the clarity and consistency of information and to respond to the needs of the audience.



**Fig. 3. Assessment of public trust in information provided by public security institutions on social media.**

The results of the survey show that the majority of respondents have encountered disinformation, misinformation, or propaganda on social media. This was indicated by 73.8% of respondents. These data reveal that the problem of inaccurate or misleading information is widespread in the context of public security. The prevalence of disinformation on social media is a significant challenge for public security institutions, as misleading information can create unfounded fears, undermine trust in institutions, and hinder communication in situations of real danger. The large number of respondents who have encountered disinformation indicates that the audience is vulnerable to manipulation of information, which requires more active action by institutions to identify false content, clarify facts, and provide clear and timely information.

Respondents expressed their opinion on how public security institutions should refute misleading information on social media. Half of those surveyed (50%) said that the most effective way would be a quick and short refutation in video format, while the same number of respondents (50%) noted that references to official sources should be provided. This shows that the public expects clear, reliable, and easily verifiable refutation of information. Another 46.7% of users believe that it would be effective to mark the refutation at the top of the information so that users would notice it immediately. A much smaller proportion (9%) indicated visuals or maps as an effective tool for combating the spread of inaccurate information. These data show that the public values fast, clearly structured, and reliable information the most. This is an important insight for institutions seeking to respond effectively to disinformation, especially given that a large proportion of the population has encountered misleading information on social media.
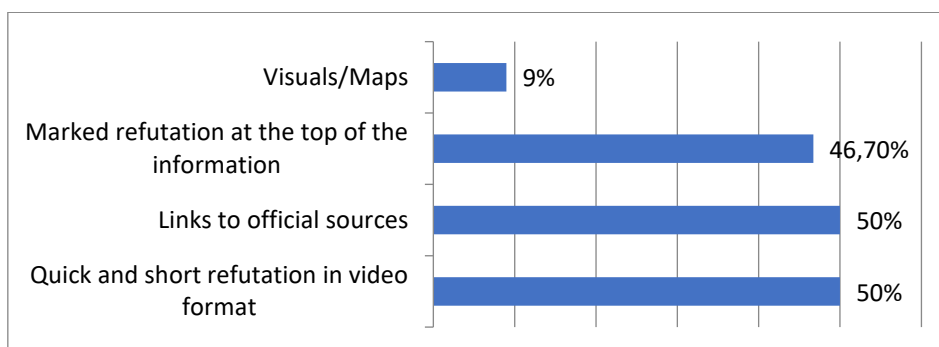
**Fig. 4. Public opinion on the most effective ways to refute misleading information on social media.**

In a public survey on the format of posts, respondents indicated that the most attention-grabbing and useful content format is short videos or short reels – 68.9% of respondents. Short texts with images came in second place in terms of popularity, with 63.1%. A slightly smaller proportion of respondents preferred the stories format (25.4%) and infographics or maps (18%). Live broadcasts were named as the most useful by 18.9% of participants. It can therefore be said that the content formats preferred by the public reveal clear opportunities for the development of public security communication. Public security institutions can achieve greater visibility and public engagement by creating short videos, visual elements, and concise, easily understandable content. This is particularly relevant when informing about incidents, providing instructions, or refuting misleading information.
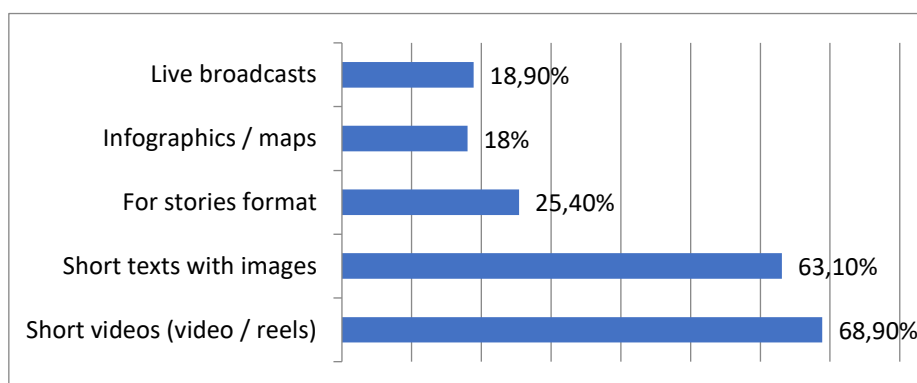


**Fig. 5. Public opinion on the most useful and attention-grabbing content formats on social media.**

**Assessment of public security institutions' communication on social media**

Twelve communication representatives participated in the survey of public security institutions. The survey data showed that the majority of communication specialists participating in the study represented the Police Department – as many as 75% of all respondents. Other institutions accounted for smaller shares, with the State Border Guard Service representing 8.3% and the Public Security Service representing 16.7%. Representatives of the Fire and Rescue Department and the Financial Crime Investigation Service did not provide any data. Therefore, these data show that the results most closely reflect police communication practices, but also provide an opportunity to see the opinions of several other public security institutions.

The survey data revealed that all public security institutions participating in the study officially use Facebook (100%), with the majority using YouTube (75%) and Instagram (66.7%). However, none of the institutions use TikTok or Telegram, and only 8.3% use LinkedIn. A comparison of the results of both groups reveals clear differences. Residents use TikTok much more often than institutions. This shows that some of the public may not be able to access information because institutions focus only on more traditional platforms. In addition, the platforms used by the public are more diverse, while those used by institutions are more concentrated on a few main channels. This suggests that there are untapped opportunities to expand communication into areas where residents, especially younger ones, are actively involved.
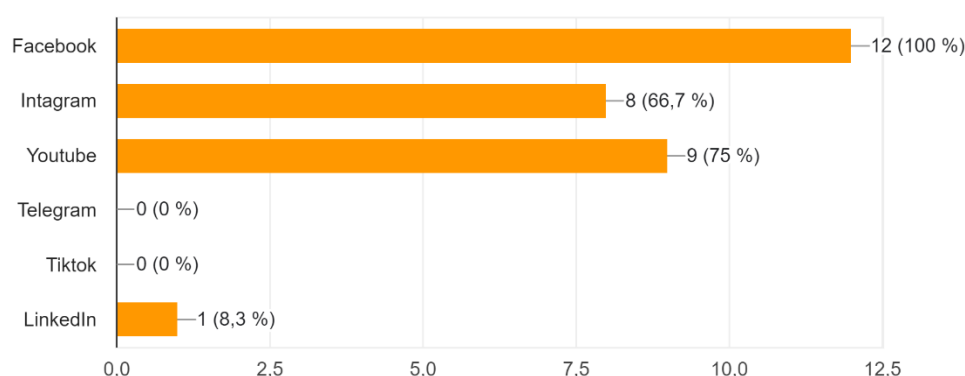


**Fig. 6. Platforms used by public security institutions**

Communication representatives of public security institutions identified several key challenges they face when communicating on social media. The majority of respondents (66.7%) noted that one of the most significant difficulties is the inability to reach all user groups. This shows that it is difficult for institutions to ensure an adequate level of communication and effectively reach audiences of different ages, interests, or digital skills. The second most frequently mentioned challenge is the lack of human and organizational resources, which was indicated by 58.3% of respondents. This reveals that institutions lack the time, staff, or skills needed for high-quality communication on social media. Other challenges are related to technological and informational factors: 33.3% of institutional communication representatives face problems with algorithm visibility, 25% face uncertainty in legal regulation, and 16.7% face the spread of misinformation and rumors, as well as difficulties in coordinating messages with partners. These results reveal that the communication of public security institutions is limited by both internal (resources, competencies) and external factors (platform algorithms, disinformation, legislation). This creates a field of challenges that has a direct impact on the effectiveness of public security communication.
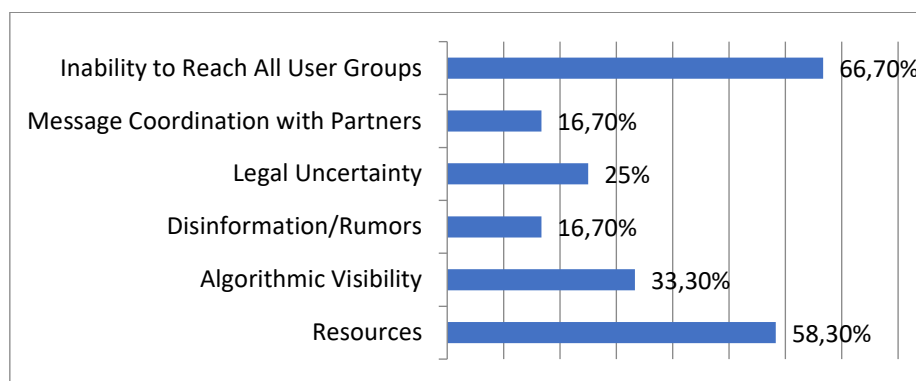
**Fig. 7. The biggest challenges in communicating through social media.**

Public security institutions' communications representatives indicated that they most often use text and image formats on social media, with all respondents participating in the survey (100%) applying this format. The results also show that short videos (reels) are often used (91.7%) as well as stories (83.3%). Maps or infographics (25%) and live broadcasts (16.7%) are less frequently chosen.

A comparison of the responses of the public and institutions shows that their choices partly coincide, but there are also clear discrepancies that affect the effectiveness of public security communication. The public considers short videos to be the most attractive and useful communication format, and institutions use this format very often. This shows that both public opinion and the methods used by institutions coincide, so it can be said that institutions are able to adapt to contemporary communication trends. Another format selected by the public is short texts with pictures. Institutions also use this format and consider it the most suitable for communication on social media, so this format has proven itself on social media. However, there are certain differences when it comes to formats that are less popular with users. The public pays less attention to infographics, maps, and live broadcasts, but institutions still use these formats. This shows that some of the efforts of institutions may not correspond to the actual information consumption habits of the audience. The biggest difference can be seen in the stories format, although a small proportion of respondents name this format as the most attractive, institutions use it quite often.

This shows that the stories format is seen more as an additional channel for disseminating information rather than the main one. Thus, it can be seen that the formats used by public security institutions for communication on social media largely meet public expectations, but some types of content are underused (e.g., short videos (reels)), while others are used without taking users into account. These discrepancies show how communication with the public on social media could be improved.
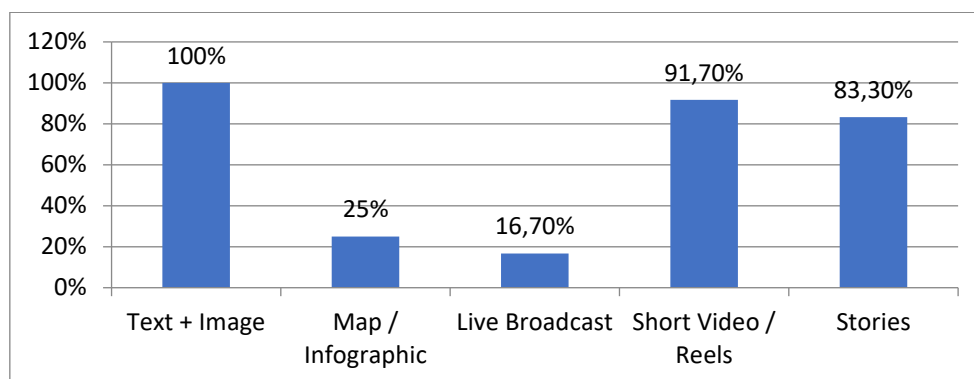
**Fig. 8. Content formats used by public security institutions on social media.**

The responses provided by public security institution communications representatives show that all respondents (100%) consider the rapid dissemination of information to be the greatest advantage. They also mention strengthening trust and feedback (91.7%) and direct contact with users (83.3%) as significant advantages. Lower communication costs are important to 41.7% of respondents, while only 8.3% of respondents highlighted attractiveness and simplicity for users. The results show that institutions most value the opportunity provided by social media to quickly reach the public and maintain direct contact and feedback, while the simplicity and attractiveness of content is not a priority for them.
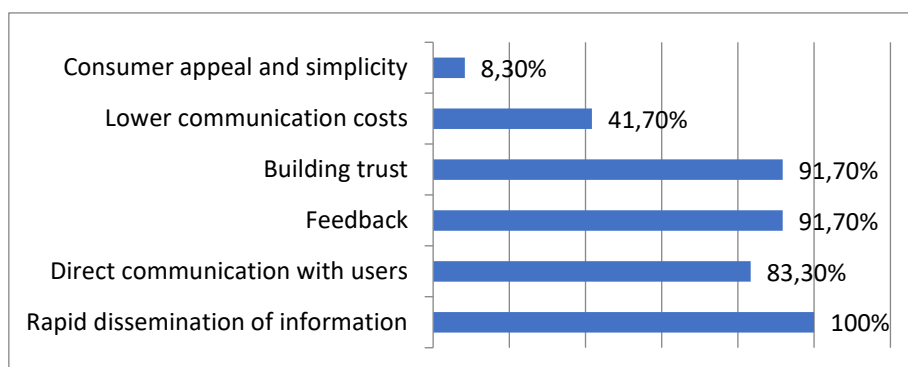


**Fig. 9. Advantages of communication by public security institutions on social media.**

The collected data shows that most institutions (66.7%) publish information about an incident on social media within 30-60 minutes, and only 8.3% publish information in less than 15 minutes. while the same proportion (8.3%) of respondents do not rush to inform the public and provide information in more than 60 minutes. Meanwhile, 16.7% of respondents indicated that they publish reports within 15-30 minutes. This shows that public security institutions respond to emerging problems fairly quickly, but not in all cases, so in order to ensure adequate security, more attention should be paid to the speed of information dissemination.
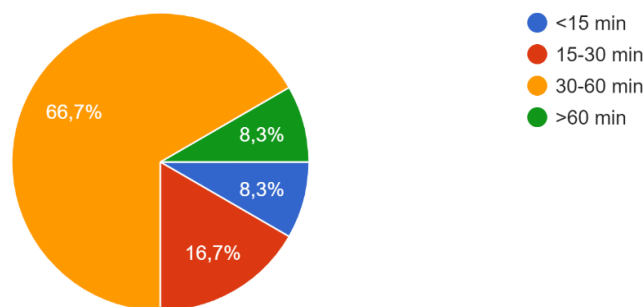
**Fig. 10. How long does it take for authorities to issue their first statement after an incident?**

The survey responses showed that the activity of public security institutions on social media varies, but the majority (58.3%) of respondents publish content 3-5 times a week. This shows that institutions are trying to maintain constant and targeted communication on social media. The rest of the institutions surveyed publish once a week (16.7%), twice a week (8.3%), 6-10 times a week and more (8.3% each).
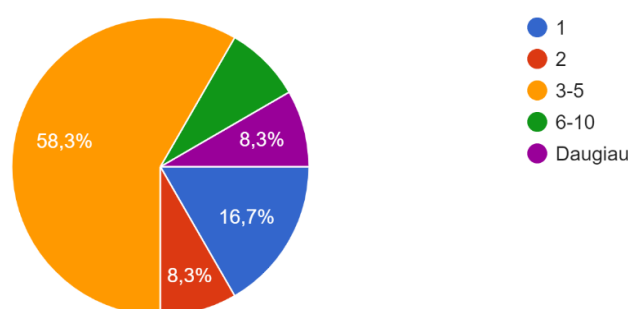


**Fig. 11. Frequency of publication**

The study showed that social media offer great opportunities for public security communication. They help to quickly reach the public, increase the availability of information, and allow for a rapid response to current events. The public actively uses social media, values the information provided by institutions, and generally trusts it, which creates favorable conditions for effective communication. However, the results also revealed significant challenges. It is difficult for public security institutions to maintain constant updates, create visually appealing content, and respond quickly to misinformation, all due to a lack of human resources, expertise, and technical limitations. The communication representatives of public security institutions themselves spoke in an open question about the ways in which they are trying to increase their audience and its reach. The most common response was to post frequent, high-quality information, thereby advertising their activities and attracting the attention of users. Public expectations often exceed the actual capabilities of institutions, which leads to communication problems such as mistrust and insufficient effectiveness of information dissemination. Comparing the opinions of both groups, it can be seen that institutions often choose formats that fully or partially meet the needs of the audience, but some means of communication are not entirely perfect. The public most appreciates short videos and clear, visually presented information, and a big plus is that public security institutions use these tools

in their practice when communicating with users via social media. All the results show that in order to build strong communication with the public, it is necessary to improve the creation of visual content, disinformation management strategies, strengthen resources, promote public trust, and properly address emerging communication problems.

## Conclusions

Looking at communication from a public security perspective, it can be seen that public security itself is ensured by certain institutions in accordance with the provisions laid down by Lithuania. Public security communication includes responding to crisis situations, preventive measures, public education, and teaching the public to recognize false information. Social media facilitate faster dissemination of information; they form a network of users that allows reaching large audiences, providing relevant information, responding to residents' questions, sharing best practices, warnings, and preventive advice, refute false information, build relationships and trust with the public, and communicate with people in real time, thus performing public security functions. However, opportunities also bring challenges – misinformation, limitations imposed by algorithms, public prejudice against public security institutions, mistrust, and a lack of resources, time, and expertise. All of this hinders smooth communication, so it is important to choose the right ways to combat the challenges that arise, to work continuously on communication, and to use a message format that is attractive to the public.

The quantitative data collected on public security communication on social media leads to the conclusion that the public and representatives of public security institutions agree on the importance and potential of social media, but their opinions differ on several aspects. The public has a positive view of public security institutions' communication, with most considering it useful and reliable, but they note that more content should be posted on social media. Meanwhile, representatives of public security institutions point to other key challenges, such as lack of resources, lack of time, managing misinformation, and limited visibility due to algorithms. The comparison showed that the communication formats used by public security institutions and different social media do not fully meet the needs of society, so it can be said that not all the opportunities offered by social media are being properly exploited in this area. In order to improve these aspects, it is necessary to take into account people's needs and available opportunities.

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