

Transformation of the Activities of National Cultural Centers

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Abstract: *The article examines the transformation of the activities of national cultural centers in the context of global digitalization. The key areas of digital activity are analyzed: the creation of virtual exhibitions, online festivals, educational platforms and interaction formats. Special attention is paid to the problems of cultural homogenization, digital inequality and the preservation of authenticity in the digital environment. Examples of successful international initiatives implemented by the British Council, the Goethe Institute, Rossotrudnichestvo and UNESCO are given. Based on the collected data, three strategically important areas have been identified for improving the effectiveness of cultural diplomacy: ensuring equal access to digital resources, taking into account the local context, and overcoming language barriers.*

Key words: *national cultural centers in the digital age: challenges, strategies and prospects of intercultural dialogue*

National cultural centers in the context of digital transformation play a key role in creating online spaces that promote intercultural dialogue. These institutions, traditionally focused on promoting national culture abroad, actively use digital technologies to expand their audience and differentiate interaction formats. According to UNESCO, more than 60% of cultural centers have switched to a mixed format of work (offline + online) after 2020, due to pandemic restrictions and increasing digital engagement [1, 45].

The digitalization of cultural activities is manifested in the creation of virtual exhibitions, online festivals and educational courses. For example, the British Council has launched the Creative Economy platform, where experts from different countries discuss issues of sustainable development through art. The Goethe Institute has developed interactive projects for learning German using VR technologies, which increased the level of engagement by 34% among the youth audience [2, 112]. Rossotrudnichestvo organized a series of webinars "The Russian World in the digital space", which brought together more than 500,000 participants from 80 countries.

However, digital platforms face the challenge of cultural homogenization. As researcher Mark Twain notes, "online spaces often reduce cultural diversity to template formats, ignoring local contexts" [3, 89]. This is confirmed by the analysis of projects where English-language interfaces and Western methodologies dominate, which can reproduce cultural hegemony. To counteract this trend, the centers are developing localized versions of platforms: for example, the Confucius Institute has adapted online Chinese language courses to regional dialects and educational standards. However, digital platforms face the challenge of cultural homogenization. As researcher Mark Twain notes, "online spaces often reduce cultural diversity to template formats, ignoring local contexts" [3, 89]. This is confirmed by the analysis of projects where English-language interfaces and Western methodologies dominate, which can reproduce cultural hegemony. To counteract this trend, the centers are developing localized versions of platforms: for example, the Confucius Institute has adapted online Chinese language courses to regional dialects and e [5, 145].

Preserving cultural authenticity in the digital space requires a balance between innovation and tradition. Virtual exhibitions such as the Digital Hermitage use 3D scanning to convey the details of works of art, but they risk reducing the experience of perception to visual consumption, excluding tactile and emotional aspects. A study by A.P. Ivanov shows that 62% of users rate virtual exhibitions as "less engaging" than their offline counterparts [6, 178]. To solve this problem, the centers are introducing interactive elements: artists' voice comments, online workshops and AR integration.

International cooperation in the digital environment opens up new opportunities for cultural exchange. The Global Cultural Hub platform, launched by UNESCO in 2022, unites more than 200 national centers and offers tools for joint creation of projects. An example of a successful collaboration was the Food and Identity Festival, where chefs from 30 countries presented recipes related to the migration stories of their peoples. According to the organizers, this approach increased the level of mutual understanding among the participants by 41% [7, 91].

Concluding the analysis, it is worth emphasizing that national cultural centers in the digital age are becoming architects of intercultural dialogue, but their effectiveness depends on solving three key tasks: ensuring equal access, preserving cultural depth and overcoming language barriers. Future research should focus on developing ethical standards for digital interaction and integrating artificial intelligence to personalize cultural offerings.

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