

LANGUAGES IN THE VIRTUAL SPACE: THE LANGUAGE USE OF THE OFFICIAL WEBSITES OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS IN BEREGOVE DISTRICT

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Nowadays, the fastest and easiest way of transmitting information to masses is via the Internet. By popular demand it would be favourable for councils to try to keep in touch with citizens on the Internet too, taking advantage of the potential of what the World Wide Web can offer. The most effective way would be the maintenance of an official website of their own. Ukrainian law on access to public information specifies what type of information should be published by the state power bodies, local authorities, including their official webpages. For instance, their decisions, the drafts to be discussed at the next session, the agenda of the meetings, the mayor's wealth statement, the contact of the local authority etc. should be made available. According to the Ukrainian language law, accepted in 2012, in those administrative units in which the native speakers of one of the 18 regional or minority languages covered by the law reaches the proportion of 10%, according to the last official census, the municipality must compulsorily and automatically ensure that their decrees are published not only in the state language but also in a minority language. In my presentation, I would like to outline if the municipalities in the Beregove district in Transcarpathia, where the ratio of Hungarian native speakers reaches 10%, have an official website, and if so, in what language(s) is the content, public information published. By examining the local websites we can ascertain the following: to what extent do the representatives of the councils and municipal offices grant the laws; is the the public information made available in Hungarian alongside the state language?