

## THE ROLE OF YOUTH COUNCILS IN FORMING THE LEGAL CULTURE OF STUDENTS

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### Summary

The author of this article explores the role of youth councils in shaping the legal culture of young students. The study revealed that the "legal culture of youth" in the sense of a holistic dynamic social phenomenon, a component of the general culture of the individual, reflecting the system of legal knowledge, the formation of skills to apply them in accordance with the situation, the presence of a system of moral and ethical beliefs and a sense of responsibility for one's own behavior, as well as awareness of the importance of legal values and guidelines. The formation of the legal culture of students is carried out on the basis of a number of legislative and regulatory legal acts of an international, national and regional nature. Of particular importance in these processes is the typical provision on youth advisory and consultative bodies, on the basis of which each youth council develops its own program documents. In the Chernihiv region, youth councils, as advisory and consultative bodies, play an important role in shaping the legal culture of youth by organizing a number of events, such as: meetings with public and political figures, round tables, forums, competitions, etc.

**Key words:** Chernihiv region, legislative framework, regulations, advisory and consultative bodies, youth,

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### 1. Introduction

The "Strategy of State Youth Policy in the Sphere of Formation of Legal Culture of Modern Ukrainian Youth" (*Boltivets*) states that the need for scientific development of the problem of formation of legal culture of modern Ukrainian youth is due primarily to the general public practical interest, the satisfaction of which is impossible without a thorough methodological and theoretical analysis of the problem and is determined by the current level of development of this issue in the youth sphere.

Investigating the significance of the legal culture of society in the context of nationwide processes, scientists emphasize that legal culture is the basis and catalyst of democratic transformations in Ukraine, and therefore, its formation should be the result of the active activity of state institutions, society, all its citizens, each individual in particular (*Atamanova, Diachenko, 2022: 84*). Accordingly, there is a need to study the specifics of the practical implementation of the provisions of the legislative and regulatory framework, as well as scientific research devoted to the formation of the legal culture of various categories of the population.

It is worth noting that the theoretical aspects of the problem under study, the essence of the phenomenon of legal culture, its structure, factors influencing its formation, the relationship between legal culture and phenomena of social life were studied by E. Nazarenko, V. Kopeychikov, G. Popadynets, T. Tymchuk, O. Chebykin, V. Bulgakova. The features of the formation

of legal culture of different categories of the population at the present stage were determined in their scientific publications by O. Ganzenko, V. Dubrovsky, N. Kovalenko, S. Tsygani. At the same time, it is worth noting that the socio-political life in Ukraine of the previous decade is associated with a number of challenges and threats, as well as with the formation of civil society and the growth of the level of national consciousness and legal awareness of the population. This actualizes the need for more thorough theoretical and practical research related to the formation of the legal culture of society in general and the individual in particular in today's conditions.

The purpose of the article is to investigate the role of youth councils in the formation of the legal culture of student youth. The formulated goal required solving the following tasks: to analyze the meaning of the phenomenon of "legal culture"; to characterize the legislative and regulatory framework for the formation of the legal culture of youth and the functioning of youth councils; to clarify the features of the activities of youth councils in the formation of the legal culture of student youth (using the example of Chernihiv region, Ukraine).

The research was carried out on the basis of taking into account the provisions of several methodological approaches, in particular the axiological one, which assumes the relationship between the legal culture of the individual and the system of value and worldview guidelines formed in it; the competence one, which makes it possible to take into account the relationships between legal culture and legal competence in the future; the activity one, which assumes the active involvement of student youth in the system of legal activities.

Among the methods of scientific research, the following methods were used: analysis and synthesis to study the provisions of the legislative and regulatory framework, scientific works; generalization and systematization – for the purpose of composing the text of the article, formulating conclusions; abstraction – for formulating theoretical provisions based on the analysis of empirical data on the work of youth councils.

## **2. Legal culture of student youth as a socio-pedagogical phenomenon**

The concepts of "legal culture", "legal education", "legal competence" are currently actively functioning in scientific discourse, the relationships between which have been studied only in general terms, and accordingly, require specification and scientific substantiation in order to obtain objective and reliable results of research on the activities of youth councils in the formation of the legal culture of student youth in Ukraine.

According to V. Kopeychikov, legal culture is a system of legal values that correspond to the level of legal progress achieved by society and reflect in legal form the state of individual freedom and other most important social values. (*Kopieichykov, 2000: 140*). H. Popadynets understands legal culture as the qualitative state of the legal life of society, which is characterized by the achieved level of development of the legal system – the state of legal consciousness, legal science, the system of legislation, law and order, legal education, and most importantly – the degree of guarantee of human rights and freedoms (*Popadynets, 2016: 424*). According to S. Cherneta, O. Durmanenko, legal culture is a purposeful, systematic activity of bodies and social institutions, which involves arming the pupil with socio-legal educational knowledge, transforming this knowledge into a person's personal beliefs and forming on this basis a responsible attitude to one's own actions and behavior in general (*Cherneta, Durmanenko, 2012: 175*). Analysis of the above definitions gives grounds for concluding that common in their content are such characteristics as the individual's adherence to the rules of social behavior, the formation of a system of moral and ethical beliefs, possession of legal knowledge and the ability to

apply them, the presence in the personality of a sense of responsibility for one's own behavior, as well as awareness of the importance of legal values, meanings and guidelines. Based on the definition of the concept of "legal culture" proposed in the scientific literature, we can conclude that "legal culture of youth" is a holistic dynamic social phenomenon, a component of the general culture of the individual, reflecting the system of legal knowledge, the formation of skills to apply them in accordance with the situation, the presence of a system of moral and ethical beliefs and a sense of responsibility for one's own behavior, as well as awareness of the importance of legal values and guidelines (*Bryzhko, 2023: 85*).

Analyzing the interpretation of the concept of "legal culture", we must take into account that in the scientific literature a distinction is made between the legal culture of society in general and the legal culture of the individual. In this regard, O. Kolosova emphasizes that legal culture is a component of the general culture of both society and the individual. As a type of general culture, it is actually a system of values accumulated by humanity in the field of law, and is a component of the legal reality of society (*Kolosova*). The legal culture of society, according to the researcher, can be characterized by such features as the degree of development of legal protection of human rights and freedoms, the ideality of normative regulation of social life, the level of legal consciousness of society, the state of law and order and the means of its maintenance. We are also impressed by the opinion of E. Nazarenko that the legal culture of society reflects the qualitative state of the legal life of society, namely: the level of development of the legislative framework; the presence of a system of legislative, executive and law enforcement bodies; the degree of fulfillment of the requirements of legal norms in all spheres of society; attitude to laws in general and to their observance in particular, as well as the life position regarding the maintenance of law and order, etc. (*Nazarenko, 1999: 17*).

Summarizing the opinions of scientists, we note that the level of formation of the legal culture of society is determined primarily by the following factors: the real need of society for law; the state of legality and law and order in the country; the degree of development of legal science and legal education in society; the level of perfection of legislation and the state of legal awareness of the population in general and officials in particular; the ratio of the universal and the national in law; the effectiveness of the activities of law enforcement agencies and the protection of individual rights and freedoms, etc. The level of legal culture of society directly affects the formation of the legal culture of the individual. In this context, it is worth noting that the legal culture of the individual as a specific carrier of the legal culture of a particular society is determined by such factors as the level of socialization of a person, the degree of assimilation and use of legal norms by him.

### **3. Legislative and regulatory framework for the formation of legal culture among student youth**

The legislation of Ukraine since independence in the field of youth policy consists of the Constitution of Ukraine dated June 28, 1996, international treaties and agreements, the binding nature of which was granted by the Parliament of Ukraine, legislative and regulatory legal acts regulating legal relations in the area under study. In this context, it is first of all worth mentioning the Laws of Ukraine "On Education" dated 23.05.1991, "On General Secondary Education" dated 13.05.1999; "On Vocational and Technical Education" dated 10.02.1998; "On Professional (Vocational and Technical) Education" dated 01.06.2025; "On Higher Education" dated 17.01.2002; "On Higher Education" dated 01.07.2014; "On Extracurricular Education"

dated 22.06.2000; "On bodies and services for children and special institutions for children" dated 24.01.1995.

Among the regulatory legal acts that regulate youth policy and influence the formation of the legal culture of youth in a certain region or settlement of Ukraine, it is worth mentioning, first of all, the provisions on youth councils that were created under local government bodies (*Pro zatverdzhennia Polozhennia pro Molodizhnu radu pry Chernihivskomu miskomu holovi*), (*Polozhennia pro molodizhnu radu pry Chernihivskii oblasnii derzhavnii administratsii*), they were developed on the basis of the standard provision on youth advisory and consultative bodies (*Pro zatverdzhennia typovykh polozhen pro molodizhni konsultatyvno-doradchi orhany*).

In particular, the regulation on the youth council under the mayor of Chernihiv states that the youth council is a permanent advisory and consultative body on the implementation of youth policy in the city of Chernihiv, the purpose of which is to promote interaction between local government bodies and the city's youth, ensure the participation of youth in decision-making regarding the implementation of youth policy, and ensure consistency of actions in resolving issues related to the life of youth (*Pro zatverdzhennia Polozhennia pro Molodizhnu radu pry Chernihivskomu miskomu holovi*). The purpose of the youth council is to strengthen the influence of youth on the life of the territorial community of Chernihiv by involving them in decision-making by local government bodies in the field of youth policy implementation. It is also noted that the main principles of the youth council under the mayor of Chernihiv are legality, the rule of law, democracy, transparency, independence, collegiality, voluntariness, political neutrality, and equality (*Pro zatverdzhennia Polozhennia pro Molodizhnu radu pry Chernihivskomu miskomu holovi*). In general, the aforementioned regulation contains the procedure for the activities of the youth council; a description of the procedure for creating and powers of the youth council; a list of rights and obligations of members of the youth council. It is worth noting that, in addition to the regulation on youth councils, the source base of the study also included reports on their activities (*Molodizhna rada pry Chernihivskomu miskomu holovi prozvituvava*), which allowed us to draw a conclusion about their positive impact on the formation of the legal culture of youth. In addition, the Youth Council under the Chernihiv City State Administration also functions, the sources for studying its work are the minutes of its meetings, published on the official website of the Chernihiv Regional Military Administration.

Thus, youth councils under city government bodies were created to activate youth policy. The following tasks were identified among the youth council's tasks: ensuring the implementation of the rights and legitimate interests of the city's youth; ensuring constant communication between local government bodies and city youth representatives in the field of youth policy implementation; creating conditions for the full use of youth potential for the benefit of the territorial community; conducting information and educational activities among youth and promoting legal awareness among city youth; participating in the development of local program projects for the implementation of youth policy; analyzing, forecasting and identifying current and promising youth development problems, participating in the development of cultural, educational and educational activities, developing the scientific and intellectual potential of youth, forming national-patriotic and moral values of youth, and forming an active public position of youth. We believe that the implementation of all these tasks is directly related to the formation of the legal culture of youth (*Pro zatverdzhennia Polozhennia pro Molodizhnu radu*, 2018).

Thus, the formation of the legal culture of students is carried out on the basis of a number of legislative and regulatory legal acts of an international, national and regional nature. Of particular importance in these processes is the typical provision on youth advisory and consultative bodies, on the basis of which each youth council develops its own program documents.

#### 4. System of events organized by youth councils to form the legal culture of students

In Chernihiv, the Youth Council under the Mayor was established in September 2018, and in December 2020 it reported on its activities over two years (*Molodizhna rada pry Chernihivskomu miskomu holovi prozvituvala*), in particular, a survey was conducted among the city's youth on what events should be organized; a regional training "Student active" was organized (November 24, 2018) to increase the level of communication and establish close contacts between the heads and leaders of student self-government bodies of the Chernihiv region; the competitions "The Best Student of Chernihiv Region – 2018" (February 28, 2019) and "The Best Student of Chernihiv Region – 2019" (December 12, 2019) were held to identify comprehensively developed student youth, stimulate an increase in the level of their social activity, and promote the formation of an active student life position; the activities of the "OSS School" were organized (April 2–18, 2019) to create a community of active student youth and activate their activities in student self-government bodies; the Youth Forum "CHernihiv FORum YOUTH" was organized (June 28, 2019); the Social Project "Success Story" was launched (August 30, 2019), within the framework of which meetings of high school students and students with famous and successful personalities from various fields of activity were held; the Forum of Young Lawyers "Lawyer of the 21st Century" (October 12, 2019), the purpose of which was to unite young lawyers, before whom the best lawyers of Ukraine spoke, who shared their experience of legal activity, expressed their views on who a modern lawyer is and what skills he should possess; a meeting of the city's youth with the People's Deputy of Ukraine – Oleg Seminskyi was held (February 8, 2020); a round table "Gender Perspective of Development of Chernihiv" was organized (February 4, 2020), during which the state of implementation of gender policy at the state and local levels was discussed (*Molodizhna rada pry Chernihivskomu miskomu holovi prozvituvala*). We believe that all these events had a constructive impact on the formation of the legal culture of youth. Analysis of the minutes of the meetings of the Youth Council under the Chernihiv Regional State Administration (*Chernihivska oblasna viiskova administratsiia*) also provides grounds for concluding about the active activities of this consultative and advisory body on youth policy issues, for example, in minutes No. 4 (dated August 13, 2025) it is stated that the needs of youth in the Chernihiv region were analyzed; events were planned to spread the culture of commemoration of those who died as a result of the full-scale war in Ukraine in the Chernihiv region, etc.; prospects for cooperation of the Youth Council with public organizations, etc. are outlined. Therefore, youth councils, as advisory and consultative bodies, play an important role in shaping the legal culture of youth by organizing a number of events, such as: meetings with public and political figures, round tables, forums, competitions, etc.

#### 5. Conclusions

Thus, the study revealed that the "legal culture of youth" in the sense of a holistic dynamic social phenomenon, a component of the general culture of the individual, reflecting the system of legal knowledge, the formation of skills to apply them in accordance with the situation, the presence of a system of moral and ethical beliefs and a sense of responsibility for one's own behavior, as well as awareness of the importance of legal values and guidelines. The formation of the legal culture of students is carried out on the basis of a number of legislative and regulatory legal acts of an international, national and regional nature. Of particular importance in these processes is the typical provision on youth advisory and consultative bodies, on the basis

of which each youth council develops its own program documents. In the Chernihiv region, youth councils, as advisory and consultative bodies, play an important role in shaping the legal culture of youth by organizing a number of events, such as: meetings with public and political figures, round tables, forums, competitions, etc.

We see prospects for further research in finding ways to intensify the work of youth councils in shaping the legal culture of students, developing relevant programs and recommendations.

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