

THE PECULIARITIES OF THE INTERACTION OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES WITH THE ELEMENTS OF CIVIL SOCIETY AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

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Summary

The importance of the development of civil society institutions in modern conditions is noted. Emphasis is placed on the formal participation of citizens in public policy through the collection of their proposals. The importance of implementing the practice of holding local referendums was emphasized. Significant development of the non-governmental sector, volunteer movement, and registered public organizations at the regional level is highlighted. Significant problems in regions with a high level of sociological and political science education and science are pointed out. Program priorities and the potential effectiveness of program activities to promote the development of regional civil society are outlined. Emphasis is placed on the importance of educational activities for pupils, students, and other categories to ensure public awareness of the activities of civil society institutions. The conceptual model of increased efficiency of state-public collaboration in Ukraine is analyzed. It is noted that the most common practices of cooperation are personal meetings, participation in working groups and round tables, participation in events, organization of joint events, and participation in public consultations during the development of city development strategies and joint projects. The existing mechanisms of informing about the possibility of interaction of civil society institutions are noted. The main obstacles to establishing cooperation are presented. The reverse of the traditional construction concerning the influence of the public on the activities of the state is proposed. The descriptive method in its analytical and systematic focus, as well as contextual, component analysis, are used in the study.

Keywords: region, institute of civil society, democracy, state power, mechanisms of interaction.

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1. Introduction

Civil society is the foundation of democracy. The more developed it is, the stronger and more stable democracy is at both the state and regional levels. Current trends in the development of civil society in democracies are characterized by a significant increase in forms of public participation in regional and local policies and an increase in their effectiveness. Therefore, the government and civil society institutions give priority to the development, harmonization, and implementation of those principles of public participation that will make this participation effective and promote the development of civil society and local democracy.

The issue of interaction of public authorities with elements of civil society at the regional level has become particularly relevant after the completion of the decentralization reform. This has led to the emergence of new mechanisms and forms of involvement that are in the process of formation.

The purpose of the research is to consider the interaction of public authorities with elements of civil society at the regional level.

2. The methods of the research

Research methods and techniques are subordinated to the objectives of the work and are determined by the specifics of the analyzed object. The descriptive method in its analytical and systematic focus, as well as contextual, component analysis, are used in the study.

3. Forms of citizen participation in decision-making in the process of state-building

In developed and even young democracies, informing citizens or collecting their proposals has long been considered non-public participation, or is called formal or frontal participation. Public hearings, consultations, seminars, and public opinion polls are simulated forms of participation. The real participation of the public, respectively, and the high level of development of civil society are evidenced only by those firms that provide significant social influence on government decisions. This means that the public is not simply consulted, but its positions are considered, at least as a parity, but at most as a priority.

The general democratic trend is that regional and local authorities are increasingly coming under public control. The advisory functions of public committees or councils have already been passed. In Western democracies, joint authorities and the public increasingly make final decisions. Local referendums are also being held more and more often. Therefore, local authorities are increasingly focused on implementing public decisions. The rapid development of e-democracy forces the government to actively develop and use electronic platforms for various forms of public participation.

Considering the content of the basic principles of public participation and current trends in the development of civil society in democracies as guidelines, we can identify the necessary program components, the implementation of which will contribute to the development of regional civil society.

4. The state of regional civil society

It is worth noting the optimistic assessment of the state of regional civil society, that is, a developed non-governmental sector and the volunteer movement, significant development of organizations participating in the ATO / JFO. However, all-Ukrainian and specific regional problems hinder the realization of significant development potential. The first is the material and financial instability of civil society institutions, the lack of mass civic education, and the low spread of the values of dialogue and partnership in society. The second is the problems related to the location of the border and the social consequences of the “armed conflict in eastern Ukraine”, “cultural, religious and ethnic heterogeneity of the region”, with disparities in the development of communities in the region.

It should be noted that the only problem of regions “with a high level of sociological and political science education and science” is the lack of thorough research on the state

and activities of public organizations and monitoring of civil society. In general, the level of development of civil society suits local authorities, and the main task is to help solve some problems that constrain its “significant potential”.

Comparing these activities with the purpose and objectives makes it possible to determine both program priorities and the potential effectiveness of program activities to promote the development of regional civil society.

The first tasks are analytical support of public awareness of the activities of civil society organizations and ensuring public awareness of the activities of civil society organizations. Although the deep difference in the wording of these tasks is not entirely obvious, the program identifies the information problems as a priority. Accordingly, it is through their solution that the regional government plans to significantly promote the development of civil society.

Educational activities for pupils, students, and other categories include providing information to the public on the activities of civil society organizations (CSOs). The most important task is to promote the institutional development of CSOs. However, it should be addressed in conjunction with others, primarily by expanding forms of public participation and public involvement in the decision-making process, with the development of procedures and mechanisms for considering the results of public participation in decision-making. However, state programs provide only financial support to CSOs on a competitive basis for the implementation of civil society development projects.

The activities are aimed at promoting the institutional development of CSOs, in general, it has a very indirect connection with the activities of CSOs. Social entrepreneurship and social responsibility, publishing literature for national minorities - all these are not directly related to the problems of civil society development, and therefore, are not an effective means of solving program problems. The measures are aimed at encouraging volunteering and developing self-organization. It is planned to gather volunteers annually and create favorable conditions for the self-organization of the population, without any specification.

The main thing is to expand the real participation of the public and CSOs in regional policy. This participation remains at the advisory level. The consultation itself and the work of advisory bodies in a program format is a process for the sake of the process, not the result. Finally, the mechanisms and procedures for considering advisory participation, as well as the reporting of public authorities on the extent to which public positions are considered in decision-making, are not mentioned. Therefore, the regional authorities do not consider reflection as a means of promoting the growth of public activity and establishing an effective dialogue with the public.

The software of the researched direction due to its illogicality and inconsistency blocks the movement towards the development and expansion of forms of public participation, increasing public influence on the activities and decisions of the government.

The largest funds will be used to promote the development of CSOs. Tasks are indeed a priority and require adequate funding. In the second place, there is funding for measures to improve the interaction between government and civil society. Therefore, there is a chance for celebrations and festivities, and social services to the population from the authorities and public organizations, which are planned and supplemented by seminars to strengthen public participation. The only question is how much it will increase the effectiveness of the interaction. The third financial priority is the information direction. The main executor of the events is the Departments of Mass Communications and Access to Public Information.

The real aspect of cooperation between society and the authorities of Ukraine is possible only if there is a full division of competencies between them. This issue has a

personalized, state-government and government-police genesis, so its solution should be based on the principles of all-dimensionality, comprehensiveness, and adherence to the fundamental principles established by the domestic legislator (*Marynovych, 2019*).

5. Mechanisms of state-public collaboration in Ukraine

Necessary in the context of the development of legal cooperation in Ukraine, we recognize the creation of basic, fundamental approaches to the implementation of the concepts of public administration mechanisms of interaction between the population and government agencies with the influence of the latter. At the same time, the theoretical component of regulation and public resonance must allow directing the systematic use of state instruments in a non-competitive direction.

It should be noted that the basis for the development of civic cooperation in Ukraine should be the separation of the role and place of public bodies in society, their positioning as determinants of its ideological, specific, and mental foundations of general development. Therefore, the functional purpose of state activities should be equated with ensuring the impact on civil relations, interspersed with human rights and legal management activities. Comprehensively, this approach will help create a flexible, stable, and well-ordered mechanism through which it is possible to prevent erroneous and outdated claims about the state and its public relations.

The most common practices of interaction are personal meetings, participation in working groups and round tables, participation in events, organization of joint events, participation in public consultations during the creation of city development strategies, and implementation of joint projects. Interaction is situational rather than systemic. The basis for establishing fruitful cooperation is trust based on the previous positive experience of cooperation. Thus, the possibility of interaction is based on individual contacts, which negatively affects the assessment of the transparency of existing mechanisms for interaction.

Among the most influential mechanisms are CSO representatives participating in the contest, personal meetings with the mayor and officials, and joint organization of events. The least effective are media outlets, direct action, delegating their representatives to the authorities, electronic petitions, and developing and promoting research results.

The most used mechanisms are the most influential. The most common areas of cooperation are non-formal education, social services, culture, and the arts, research, and monitoring. It is in these areas that “soft projects” are most often implemented. Cooperation in the implementation of infrastructure projects is less common.

CSOs have a sufficient level of awareness of each other’s existence and activities. CSOs rate their level of awareness of the activity as above average. On average, CSO representatives know about 10 – 15 organizations working in their field.

Existing mechanisms for informing each other about the possibility of interaction are the placement of information on official resources (sites and pages on social networks) and personal invitations. CSOs also use more innovative mechanisms, such as shared chat. These mechanisms require personal acquaintance or initiative and a desire to find the necessary information. This can negatively affect the level of awareness of the possibility of involvement and transparency of these mechanisms.

Factors that determine successful interaction are motivation, clearly defined goals, understanding of the real needs of the audience, mutual trust and responsibility, lack of

prejudice and unreasonable criticism, clear division of responsibilities, partnership, compliance, transparency and accountability, systematic interaction, focus on the result and the presence of the result of the interaction.

6. Ways to optimize the interaction of public authorities with elements of civil society at the regional level

It is worth noting the need to introduce the practice of delegating some powers and fulfilling the social order. Representatives expressed readiness to discuss and consider such a delegation. CSOs note the urgent need for this form of cooperation to strengthen urban development. Potential areas for the implementation of relevant practices are research and monitoring, organization of events, expert support, and advice. The participants of the research also emphasize that establishing such interaction requires the introduction of transparent mechanisms and strengthening mutual responsibility and professionalism (*Research of the interaction of civil society organizations and authorities in Vinnytsia*).

The main obstacles to cooperation are lack of trust in each other, mutual prejudices, misunderstanding on the part of CSOs, how CSOs can strengthen their activities, lack of transparent mechanisms for CSOs to first contact CSOs, previous negative experiences, lack of knowledge of responsibilities and activities, lack of the common base of contacts with CSOs in local authorities, the complexity of working with the treasury for CSOs, the lack of effective information to each other about the needs and opportunities for interaction. The research also identified the need to improve public participation mechanisms, including calls for CSO projects.

As part of the research, it is possible to propose an inverted with the traditional design, which relates to public influence on the activities of the state. Therefore, we focus on the development of the gnostic functional and technological needs of the state to influence the development of civil society and thus use its potential to optimize the sphere of public administration.

The opposite effect occurs on the one hand, the state creates an appropriate institutional space for the development of civil society, and on the other, it gets the opportunity to use its influence to strengthen the internal functional system. This quite clearly illustrates the expediency of strengthening civil society institutions and the effectiveness of their impact on public administration, as it leads to the optimization of the state. It should also be noted that the instrumental influence of the state on the development of civil society in Ukraine causes a change in the traditional paradigm of civil society functions, which involves the active participation of citizens and state institutions to optimize the internal activities of public authorities (at the level of structural units). In this regard, the involvement of the state in the potential of civil society, in turn, ensures the effectiveness of public authorities in terms of law enforcement, anti-corruption, and other socio-political challenges.

The state in Ukraine must restructure its technological potential in such a way as to stimulate repeatedly the structural development of civil society, creating an appropriate regulatory space for public control over public authorities, which will serve to prevent and stop violations of civil rights and freedoms. This context of identifying the instrumental influence of the state on the development of civil society, ensuring the structural use of the latter's potential for effective public administration gives a direct understanding of civil society control on "systemic activities of authorized civil society institutions and individuals to ensure compliance and of public opinion" (*Troitska, 2019*).

The instrumental influence of the state on the development of civil society in Ukraine should relate to the expansion of forms of public control, analysis, and evaluation of public authorities on its initiative. It should be noted that the operation of such a law in most developed democracies does not contain a clear list of norms that would be consistent with the constitutional rights of citizens to appeal to public authorities. However, this does not deprive the conceptual and technological effectiveness of relevant laws, which thus allow the state, on the one hand, to declare its functional attitude to the institutions of civil society, and on the other hand, civil society itself gets more subjectivity for optimization of public authorities. The latest articulation of the state's institutional influence on the development of civil society as a mechanism for optimizing the interaction of public and state control involves not only regulating various aspects of citizens' lives but also creating conditions for active civil society institutions in public administration and public control

The in(*Okolesnova, 2018*).roduction of public platforms at the local level of public authorities in Ukraine plays an important role in this process. Their functional focus should be to ensure the interaction of citizens and public associations, on the one hand, and public authorities on the other. The introduction of such instrumental innovations in the field of public administration in Ukraine will optimize the existing practice of interaction between public and state control.

The instrumental influence of the state on the development of civil society and the use of its potential in public administration processes also involves the stimulation of public initiative. Because of this, the state as an institution of public administration, stimulating the involvement of civil society, functionally increases its role in the process of democratization of public authorities. This is because the main purpose of the public initiative is "to repeal, supplement or change the current or adopt a new legal or law enforcement action" (*Kocheva*).

To optimize the forms of interaction between state and public control in Ukraine, the main attention should be paid to normalizing the functional positions of public authorities and civil society institutions on parity in the formation of relevant control institutions in public authorities, as well as quotas to balance the representation of relevant state institutions. This will lead to the result that the interaction of public and state control will acquire new functional content, according to which public initiatives will move from the status of recommendatory to mandatory.

7. Conclusions

Thus, our analysis of the instrumental influence of the state on the development of civil society as a means of optimizing the interaction of public and state control in Ukraine allowed systematizing the most effective forms of state influence to ensure public participation in public administration at the regional level, its stimulation and motivation, as well as the potential of civil society in the exercise of state control, including the creation of public platforms, public expertise, and public initiative, by which the correction of the system of public administration of Ukraine is done.

The necessity of transferring the activity of public councils from the status of recommendatory to imperative, which serves to strengthen the functional and resource capacity of public authorities and the effectiveness of interaction between public and state control, is substantiated.

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