

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF PARTNERSHIP INTERACTION BETWEEN THE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UKRAINE'S HUMANITARIAN POLICY: THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION

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Abstract: The article shows that the idea of civil society at the present stage is undergoing serious changes, which determines corresponding changes in the mechanisms and vectors of partnership between the state and civil society. In particular, the object of the study is the socio-political interaction of government authorities and institutions organizing civil society in the landscape of digital transformation. The concepts of digital polyarchy and digital anarchy are analyzed, and the role of humanitarian policy in overcoming negative trends in the interaction between the state and civil society is outlined.

Keywords: civil society; humanitarian policy; humanitarian space; European integration; public management mechanisms; international economic relations; digital means.

1 Introduction

Civil society and the state are socio-political phenomena that are objectively interconnected and interdependent, a tandem in which the leading position should belong to civil society. If the institutions of civil society are insufficiently developed or there are no proper guarantees for the effectiveness of their activities, it cannot be said that there is a true democracy in such a state. The experience of developed countries proves the proportionality of the existence of civil society and the rule of law. Both of these elements create conditions for each other to strengthen interaction, rather than parallel development of society in relation to the state.

In a pluralistic democratic society, where opposing group and individual interests often collide, namely civil structures take on the functions of mediators. The number of organizations and people involved in this area is constantly increasing.

The organizational basis of civil society is the non-profit sector. Non-governmental non-profit organizations become a catalyst for the implementation of feedback between the government and citizens, which contributes to the development of their sense of patriotism, responsibility, civic solidarity, the formation of an active life position, the development of self-organization and self-government. Modern NPOs have occupied a niche related to the provision of social services [38]. They have accumulated significant potential, abilities, and a system of resources (intellectual, material, information, and human), which are used in daily work to increase the efficiency of social technologies, develop new methods of resolving social problems in those sectors of the social sphere where the state cannot fully implement its social function, in particular, the function of implementing humanitarian policy.

Now in Ukraine, at all levels of government, the attention of government bodies is focused on developing forms of ensuring constant partnership interaction with civil society institutions and their legislative consolidation. The state is trying to provide new and develop existing mechanisms for ensuring cooperation with representatives of the non-profit sector in order to effectively resolve issues of socio-economic development of the country and regions. The ideas of developing social partnership based on equal cooperation are becoming prevalent. To effectively implement the provisions of social programs implemented in Ukraine, relations between government authorities, business, and the non-profit sector should be built on the principles of solidarity, cooperation, and partnership in order to optimize joint efforts in this direction. Non-governmental non-profit organizations are not always ready to take on the role

that their foreign counterparts successfully perform in a number of countries. The catalyst for building true democracy with a developed structure of civil society institutions in modern reality is technical innovation and information and communication technologies. In the hands of people, they have become a tool for expressing their opinions on state policy and current phenomena, realizing the possibility of reporting to power structures and introducing civil initiative into life. There is a trend of transition to a new level of implementation by citizens of their constitutional rights. The spread of the Internet expands the rights of citizens by providing instant access to political and legal information, increasing the ability of people to participate in the political decision-making process and monitor the actions of governments. All these processes are aimed at increasing civic activity and legal culture of citizens.

At the same time, the subjects of social partnership are not the social groups or strata themselves, but the institutions that represent the interests of these groups - power institutions and civil society organizations. In accordance with this approach, social partnership is considered as one of the forms of interaction between state institutions and civil society [2]. At the same time, there are pitfalls here. Analyst Vladimir Litkevich talks about the so-called "Ukrainian paradox": "according to various estimates, of the number of officially registered public organizations, about 5% are truly socially active, 90% of whose budget is formed from funds from international donors. According to the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 80% of Ukrainians are not members of any public organization. Although, according to the formal indicator of the number of public organizations, Ukraine almost does not lag behind the pan-European level" [43].

The interaction of state authorities and local governments with the public remains ineffective due to the lack of transparency of their activities, bureaucratic procedures for this interaction and the low level of mutual trust, which, in particular, is discussed in the national strategies. This leads to a lack of support and to the resistance from society, often - resistance even to urgently needed changes. In the conditions of European integration of Ukraine, this fact can become a serious obstacle. In this regard, first of all, theoretical understanding of the modern paradigm of partnership between the state and civil society in the digital landscape, using humanitarian policy tools to build or strengthen this partnership is an urgent task.

2 Materials and Methods

The fundamental basis for the study of civil society is theoretical and conceptual research. The work used various approaches, including systemic, comparative, institutional, and sociocultural. The methodological basis of the research is such general scientific approaches and methods of social cognition as historical, logical, systemic, comparative, and institutional. The theoretical basis of the work is the generally accepted principles of dialectical knowledge of social reality, processes of social development, fundamental principles of philosophical, political science and sociological sciences.

3 Results and Discussion

The key category for explaining the state of modern society is the concept of "network", which arose and is developing as a purely technical phenomenon. However, since the network permeates the entire social environment, its interpretation solely from the standpoint of computer science is not productive. The approach to the study of social phenomena should be at the intersection of computer science and sociology, since the subject of research is society [25]. The approach of the French structuralists Felix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze, who characterize a society covered by multifunctional connections in the categories of natural sciences, seems constructive [3; 4]. The

network society is compared to a rhizome - the structure of the root system, when the taproot is replaced by many chaotically intertwined shoots that are unpredictable in their development. The rhizome is an image of the modern world of the postmodern era - polycentric, asymmetrical, and disordered [1]. The task of a social theorist is to comprehend the qualitatively new state of social communication and the role of humanitarian policy as a connecting link in the partnership between the state and civil society.

Digital society is characterized by the development of interactions in networks, the transition to networks of institutions and practices, which leads to a global complication of the social system. Closed hierarchical structures are replaced by the network principle of organization, which is more flexible, open and mobile. While classical social institutions are based on a formal hierarchy and relative stability of role functions, their network organization is based on unfixed leadership, autonomy of parts, and creativity [19].

In turn, government agencies are actively involved in the digital environment through the creation of e-government, designed to fill the gaps of representative democracy, provide civil society with negotiating power and influence the political agenda, being informed about the state of affairs in government. Such a political model should ideally help achieve consensus between government and society [5-7]. Electronic participation goes beyond the political sphere and involves the use of Internet services to inform citizens and engage them in decision-making. Online mechanisms for dialogue with citizens allow authorities to take into account public opinion and dynamically respond to public requests [39-42]. Through online work with citizens, the state has the opportunity to develop a new agenda in public policy, as well as control lower levels of government. State Internet projects also have a symbolic meaning, since they help increase the legitimacy of the political regime and indicate that the latter "hears" society and takes it into account in decision-making [10]. Social networks objectively help to increase civil society's awareness of the state of affairs in government bodies and lead to a reduction in the information vacuum between society and government [17].

Meanwhile, information and communication technologies bring not only positive colors to the palette of relations between the state and society. Free communication challenges traditional power relations based on the idea of a hierarchy of social institutions and the desire to maintain this unification [9; 14; 21]. The connection between people, which it creates, lays the foundation for alternative social mobilization, expressed in protests and other forms that increase the conflict nature of the social system. As a result, free interaction in networks is combined with strict measures of control over civil society and the actions of its activists in the virtual space [11; 12]. Public authorities seek to control public discussions, supporting relatively "safe", and often not the most mainstream, topics, trying to stimulate economic activity, while limiting the political potential of the virtual space. In addition, technologies for transmitting information using social networks are often used to manipulate public opinion: there is a shift in emphasis in the perception of the surrounding world from scientific, educational, and cultural to entertainment and reference, which gives rise to a superficial perception of information [23; 24; 28]. In turn, this superficial perception often leads to the formation of a chimeric "enemy image" and the radicalization of public sentiment. In particular, alarming trends are observed in the EU and the USA in the wake of a sharp increase in far-right extremism (see Figures 1-2).

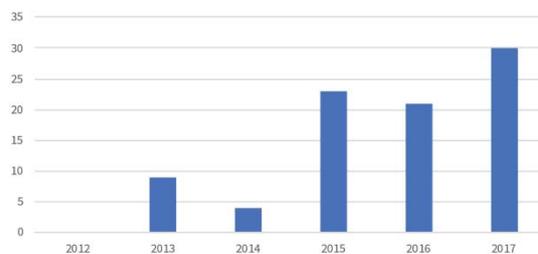


Figure 1. The rise of extreme right-wing attacks in the EU, 2012-2017 [26]

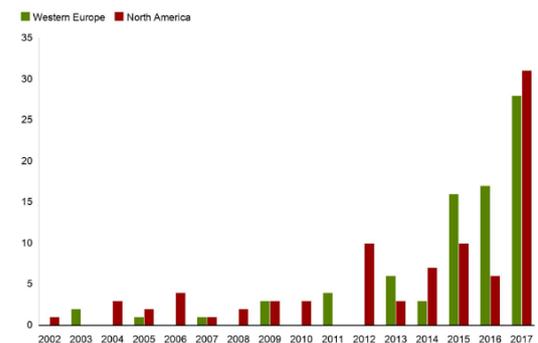


Figure 2. Far-right extremism incidents in EU and U.S. [13]

The concerns expressed by J. Habermas at the dawn of the digital society regarding the potential conflict of power-social relations are confirmed in research in recent years conducted by both social theorists and international organizations. They concern a new format of relations between government and society in the context of network interactions. In political science research, this phenomenon is called "digital (or electronic) authoritarianism" [31], the essence of which is that by developing network interactions and allowing relatively free communication online, government institutions strive to increase interference in these processes. In the Internet space, public authorities perform the function of not just a participant, but also a regulator. Not only authoritarian or conditionally democratic countries (China is recognized as the leader of digital authoritarianism), but also such well-known "flagships" of democracy as the USA and EU countries are trying to control network interactions, sometimes limiting them. Manifestations of digital authoritarianism include the fight against "fake news" by tightening national laws and blocking Internet resources, as well as creating systems for controlling personal data.

It is important that the creators of such digital authoritarianism view it not simply as the "all-seeing eye" of a new state, armed with technological innovations that actually destroy personal freedoms and the inviolability of personal life [32-37]. They offer a positive interpretation of this phenomenon, believing that the new state, according to the "top-down" scheme, includes certain groups of citizens in public and social progress. This ensures both economic growth and the involvement of outsider, lagging groups in the country's success [30]. The social rating is interpreted as a new social elevator, as an opportunity for citizens to gain access to public goods. This is a new interpretation of inclusive economic growth precisely through state control over the actions of citizens, based on new technological capabilities [8]. This is a kind of perverted form of humanitarian policy, humanitarian policy "with a minus sign".

According to the information from Freedom House, an American non-governmental organization used to compile the Internet Freedom Index, online freedom has been steadily declining throughout the world over the past decade. Thus, the Freedom on the Net report dated November 5, 2019 indicated that global Internet freedom has been steadily declining since

2010, and social networks, instead of providing equal conditions for civil discussions, are becoming a tool of social and political control. Of the 65 countries assessed in 2019, a decline in Internet freedom was observed in 33 countries. It has been most visible in Sudan and Kazakhstan, where the overthrow of presidents has led to widespread blocking of social media platforms, disrupted internet connectivity and widespread use of electronic surveillance to restrict freedom of expression. In 26 of 30 countries, evidence of interference in digital elections was found: manipulation of online discussions, restrictions on access, punishment of political opponents, etc [44; 45]. In 20 countries, social networks and communication applications were blocked in the run-up to elections or during periods of civil unrest. The report also showed a decline in Internet freedom in the United States, where, despite a dynamic and censorship-free online environment, there was increased public scrutiny by law enforcement and immigration authorities, increased monitoring of social media platforms, and manipulation of content. At the same time, Iceland is recognized as the world's best defender of Internet freedom, where almost universal communications have been established and user rights are protected [22].

In Ukraine, which is a candidate for joining the EU, not everything is going smoothly in this regard. In particular, after February 24, 2022, a significant part of the interviewed media professionals said that their employment had violated their right to free speech and information after February 24, 2022. Journalists most frequently reported censoring of prepared materials or prohibitions on publishing particular information (22%) and rejection of accreditation (17%) as well as authorities' failure to disclose socially significant information (51% of respondents). When journalists admitted the existence of censorship, they often claimed that media owners and different state or municipal authorities were responsible for it [20]. Even more surprising are recent statements about initiatives to legislatively prohibit the Telegram messenger, which has a huge audience in Ukraine.

However, technology provides fundamentally new opportunities for civil society. It is interesting that China, having set an example of building digital authoritarianism, also showed its direct opposite - how technology can serve the protest of civil society against the state. It is about months-long protests in Hong Kong (with all the significant reservations, this is still the territory of the People's Republic of China). Moreover, we are not just talking about resistance to technological innovations (such as the use of masks to block video recording capabilities); what is much more interesting is the use of technological innovations by society itself, primarily in the field of communications [47-51]. Social networks and instant messengers are actively used to organize mobile protest activity: a rally of several tens of thousands of people can be assembled in just a few hours. Social networks are becoming an alternative source of information and a way to quickly and efficiently deliver it to consumers.

It is not surprising that new protest movements are forming in various countries and regions and an anti-establishment agenda is emerging. New ways of fundraising and financing protests are emerging. In addition, if the state tries to control society with the help of new technologies, then society, with the help of the same modern technical means, seeks, in turn, to control officials. New concepts of the dominance of civil society are emerging. A number of experts call them "digital polyarchy" [15].

In its extreme form, "civil techno-optimism" manifested itself in the form of the concept of the uber-state. This is a model of public administration in which the state acts as an intermediary between the citizen and public services, while the citizen has the opportunity to control the progress of the process and evaluate the quality. In essence, "a citizen can "call" the state like a taxi in a situation where he needs government services. Otherwise, he simply "does not see" the state" [29].

This is a kind of "project" of digital anarchy, which has its own adherents. In the debate between digital polyarchy and digital authoritarianism, this third path of "digital anarchy" should not

be forgotten. It is no longer about the formation of a new civil society, but about the chaoticization of political life, again, with the help of modern technologies [62]. Modern network movements set the task not so much to control the state but rather to organize protests and riots. A person becomes the object of unprecedented information manipulation. Fake news can be generated literally at home. Special technical solutions have appeared - Deepfake fake news generators, Telegram bot constructors, and other easily accessible new products. A person "processed" in this way is much easier to involve in protest activity. In addition, before our eyes, electoral technologies are radically changing. [52-56]. Targeted manipulations, the so-called data-driven campaign, computer psychotyping and psychometrics allow the most unexpected politicians to win elections. This becomes a challenge to both the state and society and works to chaoticize politics, which, however, generates a demand for a return to the dominance of strong political structures, again spinning the spiral of social development. Thus, in each country the questions still remain open: in what direction will technology shift political development? Will the course towards digital polyarchy prevail? Will a new authoritarianism take over, or will the tendencies of a new anarchy become ever stronger?

Technologies theoretically make it possible to return even the topic of direct democracy to the agenda. Earlier, it used to be believed that direct democracy was impossible for technical reasons - it is difficult to hold permanent referendums in large countries if voting takes place using printed ballots. Today there is a technical opportunity to constantly contact society to find out its opinion [63; 64]. So far, technologies are being tested at the level of electronic voting, but this is already a question of the speed of technical progress. A much more difficult question sounds as follows: is modern society ready for such fundamental changes? Moreover, there is an increase in the number of human manipulations using the same new technologies. We have entered the era of fake news, online manipulation of political behavior, and digital populism, which implies the involvement of new participants in the political process through communication on social networks and sending campaign materials via instant messengers [65-67]. To apply digital populism, hierarchical political organizations are not needed; it is aimed primarily at situational participation in the political process.

Thus, there is an obvious need to revise the paradigm for integrating digital solutions into the processes of partnership between the state and society, as well as the very principles of this partnership. The "cement" of the partnership should be a humanitarian policy aimed at the comprehensive development of a person, each individual as an element, a "building block" of the country's social capital.

By expressing those private interests that have not fallen into the orbit of state policy or are not taken into account by it, civil society thereby opposes the state. But the meaning of this opposition is not to "annihilate" public power, but to force it to pay attention to these interests and express them in state, that is, public policy [27]. Consequently, the interaction involves not only opposition to the state, but also cooperation with it. Therefore, smart power is interested in civil society, because it signals to it that there are some private interest groups that claim a place in public politics.

Civil society, expressing the real dynamics of the "life world", constantly introduces elements of imbalance into relations with government structures. Namely this energy of real life does not allow the state to become isolated in its own bureaucratic virtuality. Due to this dynamics of interests and needs that do not fit into established norms, procedures and rituals, there will always be contradictions in the relationship between society and the state [18].

The constructive oppositional confrontation between the state and civil society does not at all indicate that civil society represents a positive pole, concentrating the democratic principle, while the state is a negative pole, burdened with

authoritarian-bureaucratic perversions [57; 60]. The illusion that civil society is always a “good society” must be abandoned. It is what citizens are like. Its condition and role in each country are determined by historical characteristics and traditions, the level of political culture of the population and elite. The appearance of civil society and the degree of its development depend on whether the country is democratic or has strong authoritarian traditions. In a word, civil society is an inseparable part of *socium* and therefore functions and develops as its component [16; 18]. Consequently, one should talk about interaction in which not only civil society becomes the basis of democratic statehood, but also the rule of law, representing public interest, protects human and civil rights from all kinds of deformations in the structures of civil society, in particular from the manifestation of anarchic aspirations.

Democratic social systems typically create space for legal forms of civil disobedience and develop mechanisms for constructive responses to acts of civil disobedience. When the framework of legality strictly limits the expression of protest sentiments in acts of civil disobedience, then conflicts arise that can undermine the political and legal stability of public life [61]. The important question is: How to prevent this? Of course, the formation of a mass political and legal culture that includes respect for the rule of law, including on the part of those who express civil disobedience, is of great importance. Of no less importance, however, is the civil responsibility of the authorities, their ability to keep its finger on the pulse of life and promptly capture the impulses emanating from it to improve existing laws and adopt new ones. Digital solutions are an indispensable tool here. To form an active civil society in the digital field, it is necessary to develop digital mechanisms for interaction between government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

The humanitarian sphere of society, being a strategic resource for ensuring the national interests of the country, creates and increases its spiritual, intellectual, and economic potential, in general acts as the cultural foundation of society, as a kind of genetic mechanism for transmitting accumulated social experience, thanks to which the full-scale implementation of the essential powers of man, originally inherent in him by nature itself, becomes possible. A change in the target component of the humanitarian sphere of society leads to the formation of a new type of integrity, focused on the assimilation of modern achievements of science and technology. The strategic goal of such integrity is to prepare and ensure the functioning of an educated and comprehensively developed intelligent person who knows how to improve himself, “build” harmonious relationships with other people, nature, and the world.

The implementation of a large-scale program to modernize the humanitarian sector in recent years has led to significant results. At the same time, the pace and depth of transformations in this area do not yet fully satisfy the needs of society, the state, and the individual.

We believe that these problems need to be divided into at least two large blocks:

I. Legislative support for the transformations taking place in the humanitarian sphere, the definition of mutual responsibility and relations in the triad “society - state - humanitarian sphere”, supplementing it with another link, which can be conditionally called the “consumer of services provided by the humanitarian sphere” in the broadest sense of this concept. In parallel, this structure should be supplemented by other system-forming ones (organization of personal life in accordance with democratic values, features of the new economy, modern scientific and technical achievements; ensuring the availability of high-quality modern education throughout life for all citizens, etc.) supporting (financing), accompanying and other elements, the role and significance, as well as the functionality of which must be uniformly ensured throughout the state.

II. The actual humanitarian component processes (updating the content of science, education and the base of elements of the humanitarian sphere, introducing information technologies,

introducing new economic and managerial development mechanisms and personnel training) today must proceed in accordance with the laws in force in the country, providing a unified legal field for activities. And the adoption of these laws is a task of a general political and national level, in the solution of which all citizens of Ukraine, public organizations, teachers, political leaders and economists, the scientific and cultural community, and local governments should take part [46]. Civil society should take the leading role in this process, and the state should become a real guarantor of the availability of humanitarian services for all citizens of the country while maintaining and improving their qualities. The formation of civil society in the country, a democratic and social state will consistently continue, which means we can confidently talk about favorable prospects for solving this problem in the humanitarian sphere [58; 59]. In such conditions, it itself becomes a guarantor of social cohesion, an effective factor of national unity and social partnership, a factor in the revival of spirituality and ethnic self-awareness with the simultaneous awareness of world identity and high civic qualities of the younger generations, that is an important factor in the positive movement forward of the social process, the enduring value of any society and civilization.

The implementation of these priorities can be effective only if to rely on ensuring the evolutionary development of the humanitarian sphere while preserving all the positive achievements of the previous stages. The humanitarian sphere, being a kind of “mirror” of socio-cultural processes and the most important sphere of social reproduction, acts as a transformative force, the sphere of formation of “human capital”. It not only records the nature of the changes taking place in society, but also determines its future appearance, defines it, while at the same time remaining in direct connection with social processes. Therefore, the nature of the socio-economic development of society naturally leaves its mark on the system of humanitarian values as a whole and on the activities of its institutions.

Humanitarian policy in this context takes on the character of a kind of “social goodwill” of the state - no less important parameter than welfare, economic power, and the level of digital transformation. Namely this goodwill determines the quality of the country’s social capital, and, therefore, its competitiveness and sustainability in today’s turbulent world. Social “goodwill” should be the result of synergy in the partnership between the state and civil society.

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Primary Paper Section: A

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