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**E-GOVERNMENT AT LOCAL LEVEL
IN UKRAINE: CURRENT CONDITION
AND PROBLEMS OF FORMATION**

The article considers present stage of implementation of e-government at the local level in Ukraine and analyzes use of e-government tools by local public authorities; in particular, attention is paid to issues of efficiency of state bodies' web-sites, operation of electronic document management and organization of centers of administrative services. The author determined basic problems that hinder active implementation of e-government at the local level in Ukraine, among which are low level of interest and involvement of citizens, limited financial resources for purchase of telecommunication equipment and software, lack of effective coordination center.

Key words: e-government at the local level, electronic document management, administrative services, local public authorities, centers of administrative services, web-site of a public authority.

Statement of the problem. E-government is an element of the information society, which aims to improve people's lives. As a result of introduction of e-government a new level of public administration is provided, strengthening public trust in government and its policy, adjusting more efficient and less costly administration.

In Ukraine implementing of e-government has two-vectors; it is initiated as "from above" at the level of central public authorities, and "from below" in local authorities. Under these conditions, special attention should be paid to local levels of public administration using information and communication technology, because it ensures proper functioning of decentralization, empowerment of citizens' participation in government, thereby realizing the right of population to successfully solve local issues. At the same time efficiently constructed system of e-governance at the local level has a positive effect on general course and consequences of modernization reforms in the Ukrainian society.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The introduction of e-government in public administration of Ukraine is analyzed and grounded in works of many scientists, including O. Golobutskyi and O. Shevchuk¹, V.Yehanov², I. Klymenko and K. Lynov³, I. Pogrebnyak⁴, A. Semenchenko⁵ and others. However, their studies related primarily to state development of e-government in Ukraine. Considering this, the issue of formation of e-government at local level, including analysis of its state and obstacles of implementation, remains underdeveloped and unresearched.

The aim of the paper is to determine current condition and main problems of e-government at the local level in Ukraine.

Presentation of the basic material. According to the concept of development e-government in Ukraine, its implementation provides a qualitatively new forms of organization of state and local governments, their interaction with citizens and business entities by providing access to government information resources, the ability to receive electronic administrative services, to address state and local

¹ Голобуцький, О.П., Шевчук, О.Б. (2002). *Електронний уряд*. Київ: Атлант UMS.

² Єганов, В.В. Проблеми та перспективи впровадження системи електронного урядування в Україні. <<http://www.kbuapa.kharkov.ua/e-book/db/2012-2/doc/1/05.pdf>>

³ Клименко, І.В., Линьов, К.О. (2006). *Технології електронного урядування*: Навчальний посібник. Київ: Вид-во ДУС.

⁴ Погребняк, І.Є. Електронний уряд (e-government) і електронне урядування (e-governance): поняття та принципи функціонування. <<http://ndipzir.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Pogrebnyak7.pdf>>.

⁵ Семенченко, А.І. Електронне урядування в Україні: проблеми та шляхи вирішення. <http://www.nbu.gov.ua/old_jrn/Soc_Gum/Nvamu_upravl/2009_4/5.pdf>.

governments using the Internet¹. According to this, e-government at local level - is a form of public administration in which there is active cooperation of local public authorities together with society, person, business, non-profit organizations through information and communication technologies.

Analyzing condition of e-government at local level in Ukraine, we should pay attention to international experience of its implementation. In particular, such basic stages of development e-government in the world are distinguished:

1. Creation of web-resources of different public authorities with information about their mission and activities. These sites usually are not supported from one center and not combined into a single portal.

2. Appearing of the first elements of interactivity (such as sending and receiving responses of citizens through e-mail). News about the activities of state authorities is regularly published.

3. Creation of full interactivity: possibility to make transactions (services) online (for example, pay a fine, order a passport, to renew some licenses and patents, etc.). This specification of e-government, which aims not to inform, but to serve, involves creation of special websites to support these services not only for central but also for municipal and even regional governments.

4. Creation of unified portals of various departments and services, through which people can make any kinds of transactions which previously required to apply directly to the state body. Through local portals becomes possible registration of enterprises, registration of financial documents, legalization of foreign documents and so on. Regional portals combine a whole range of government services and private sector services: e-commerce, online banking becomes available.

5. Creation of electronic system of governance based on common standards, and government portal as a single point of access to all services - both for citizens and for business. Most experts believe that the highest level of e-democracy is the introduction of an electronic system to vote (electronic voting)².

Thus we can assume that in development of e-government at various levels of public authority Ukraine is in transition between the third and fourth stages. In general, e-government at the local level in Ukraine is aimed at the following tasks:

- coverage of activity of local public authorities (support of websites and portals to cover this activity);

- provide mechanisms to control local authorities (preliminary publication of draft decisions, informing about planned activities);

- increasing the availability of local public authority (organization of contact center to receive phone calls, of a system of electronic documents, creation of public receptions at convenient public places);

- providing information to the public and utilities regarding emergency planning and preventive work on public utilities of a city (accounting of violations of improvement rules, providing information on planned preventive works in a website, subscription to newsletters about such works);

- providing of centralized accounting of public property and transparent calculations of costs of its lease;

- support of electronic administrative services to citizens and business³.

According to results of international evaluation of e-government: «United Nations E-Government Survey 2016. E-Government in Support of Sustainable Development»⁴ (takes place every two years), which was published in July 2016, Ukraine occupied 62 place among 193 UN member countries. Thus, we can mark a significant improvement of our positions, in particular up to 25 points compared to 2014 year. Furthermore, according to information given in the UN report⁵, Ukraine can take higher positions (compared with 2014 year) due to expansion of e-consultancy activities (from 27% to 84%) and progress in use of electronic information (services E-Data, Prozorro etc.). Ultimately, electronic technologies are not only an effective tool to fight corruption, but also improve the quality of services for citizens and business entities.

¹ *Розпорядження про схвалення Концепції розвитку електронного урядування в Україні 2010* (Кабінет Міністрів України). *Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України*. <<http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2250-2010-%D1%80>>.

² Електронне самоврядування у місті Харкові. Про електронне урядування. <<http://eu.infocity.kharkov.ua>>.

³ Електронне самоврядування у місті Харкові. Про електронне урядування. <<http://eu.infocity.kharkov.ua>>.

⁴ United Nations E-Government Survey 2016. E-Government in Support of Sustainable Development. <<http://workspace.unpan.org/sites/Internet/Documents/UNPAN96407.pdf>>.

⁵ United Nations E-Government Survey 2016. E-Government in Support of Sustainable Development. <<http://workspace.unpan.org/sites/Internet/Documents/UNPAN96407.pdf>>.

At the end of 2015 were published results of a research about status and prospects of development of e-governance and administrative services in the 100 largest cities in Ukraine, realized by a coalition of non-governmental organizations: NGO "Podilska Agency for Regional Development", Association of Cities of Ukraine, Association of local authorities "Cities of e-government in Ukraine", NGO "European dialogue", Civil network "OPORA"¹. The purpose of this monitoring was to determine the degree of use of e-government elements by local governments in order to ensure rapid and unimpeded public awareness, promote transparency in local policy and combat corruption, increase the quality of administrative services, enhance public and its involvement in social and political processes.

The study provides a detailed analysis of local public authorities in the area of components and technologies of e-government trends: the effectiveness of the web-site of a City council, the system of electronic document flow and organization of a center of administrative services.

One of the first steps to introduce e-government at local level in Ukraine was creation of web-sites of local public authorities. Now a web-site of a local public authority is an effective instrument for improving public awareness of its work; it enhances cooperation between authorities and community, creates a unique opportunity to promote a city or a village; disseminates information about its economic, social and cultural life; promotes tourism and business opportunities. But despite these advantages of Internet technologies use in activity of local public authorities in Ukraine, there are no clear requirements for such web-resources. In total, according to five categories of evaluating effectiveness of official websites of local councils (access to information, feedback from public, administrative services, access to public information, comfort usability of web-site) the highest score in 2015 received Kyiv, Slavuta and Shostka; the second place shared sites of Vinnytsia, Lubny, Rivne and Sumy; the third place took website of the Ivano-Frankivsk City Council².

Summarizing the processes of formation of web-resources of local public authorities we should mark out basic patterns that are inherent to this type of resource. Firstly, these web-resources provide a wide range of legal, analytical, personalized information on organization and functioning of public authorities; structure and content of web-sites corresponds to specific constitutional authority of local public authorities. Secondly, formation of web-sites of public authorities is legally fixed obligation of authorities to implement constitutional rights of citizens to obtain information about public authorities at all levels.

At the same time, if web-sites of local governments perform exclusively information function, it is insufficient as for development of e-government tools in Ukraine, so for further development of information society in our country. So, local public authorities other than informing should give the community a considerable range of services through its own websites. These services in particular include:

- giving requests to receive information;
- download various forms of documents from web-sites (applications, registration forms and other documents);
- submission of electronic documents (applications, appeals, reports, etc.);
- monitoring of submitted to local government documents (such as a request or documents for a permission in business activities);
- online implementation of various payments (transactions) (for utilities, fines, payments to obtain administrative services, etc.);
- make an appointment to a mayor or his deputies³.

In addition, there are number of directions that need support in functioning of web-sites of local public authorities. Thus, the survey of condition and prospects of e-government and administrative services in 2015 detected that the most problematic issues regarding operation of the vast majority of web-sites of local public authorities are: submission of an application or documents for administrative services, or taking electronic queue through an electronic cabinet; tracking processing status of applications for administrative services; receiving information about financial status of deputies of the City Council; learning about the amount of funds allocated from parliamentary funds for the needs of citizens; receiving information about land issues and so on.

¹ Яскевич, А. (2015). *Моніторинг впровадження інструментів електронного урядування в органах місцевого самоврядування*. Вінниця: ГО «Подільська агенція регіонального розвитку».

² Яскевич, А. (2015). *Моніторинг впровадження інструментів електронного урядування в органах місцевого самоврядування*. Вінниця: ГО «Подільська агенція регіонального розвитку», 19.

³ Тітов, С.В., Тітова, О.В. Web-сайти органів місцевого самоврядування як складова впровадження е-урядування в Україні. <<http://www.ic.ac.kharkov.ua/RIO/v39/20.pdf>>.

Moreover, monitoring showed the absence of substantial progress in improving the convenience sites. Almost all sites have no "mobile version" and "web version for the visually impaired". Also very small amount of web-site provides information search on the tags and use sitemaps¹.

Of particular importance in the context of establishment of e-government at local level is electronic documentation. Its complex implementation at local level as one of the components of e-government helps people to get the most important benefits of government: efficiency electronic document exchange; the possibility of remote collective elaboration, approval and signature; support for storage and general availability of documents; creation and use of electronic archives. In this view, introduction of information interaction between state and local authorities based on electronic documents and with use of digital signature is seen as one of the basic principles of e-governance in Ukraine, which implementation should include creation of a unified national system of electronic document management and unified information-telecommunications infrastructure².

Requirements for electronic document management systems are regulated by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On Approval of Standard Order of electronic document management in the executive branch"³. However, the legislation does not introduce mandatory commitment to use electronic document management systems in government. For local authorities these requirements have recommendation character and this inhibits the use of common standards, approaches and methodologies in this field.

The absence of legally-stipulated requirements, clear criteria and guidelines on selection of an electronic document management system, it is rather difficult for cities to navigate in a lot of software that is offered today by developers and to choose the platform that would be flexible enough, will provide the possibility to make amendments and can be integrated with electronic document management systems from other developers, will be the most high-quality and convenient to use and support⁴.

However, we can argue that in recent years there is a positive trend in introduction of electronic documents at local level. At the same, it is still early to talk about systemic changes. Improvement takes place locally through participation of cities in various international projects and by developing its own electronic document management systems.

Currently, system of electronic document management in Ukraine is used more than in fifty major cities. According to experts, the best system of internal document management is developed by local public authorities in Vinnytsia, Kyiv and Dnipro⁵.

However, existing workflow mostly is not sufficiently developed, agreed and functions only as e-mail and mailing documents. The problematic issue is the use of a large number of software products and, eventually, difficulties in agreeing both horizontal and vertical communication of public authorities at various levels, combining them into one system and possibility of functioning of integrated system at the state level.

In 2012 the Parliament of Ukraine adopted the Law of Ukraine "On Administrative Services"⁶ in order to provide administrative services not by subjects of administrative services, but through the centers of administrative services (COAS). The adoption of this Law had to destroy commercialization in the sphere of administrative services, which took place because of intermediary structures that had a monopoly position in various fields and provided services important to implement and protect the rights and legitimate interests of a person, citizen and legal entity, including acquisition, modification or termination of rights and obligations.

¹ Яскевич, А. (2015). *Моніторинг впровадження інструментів електронного урядування в органах місцевого самоврядування*. Вінниця: ГО «Подільська агенція регіонального розвитку», 37.

² Ковбасюк, Ю.В. (заг. ред.) (2014). *Електронне урядування: підручник*. Київ: НАДУ, 127.

³ *Постанова про затвердження Типового порядку здійснення електронного документообігу в органах виконавчої влади 2004* (Кабінет Міністрів України). *Офіційний веб-сайт Верховної Ради України*. <<http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1453-2004-%D0%BF>>.

⁴ Яскевич, А. (2015). *Моніторинг впровадження інструментів електронного урядування в органах місцевого самоврядування*. Вінниця: ГО «Подільська агенція регіонального розвитку», 38.

⁵ Яскевич, А. (2015). *Моніторинг впровадження інструментів електронного урядування в органах місцевого самоврядування*. Вінниця: ГО «Подільська агенція регіонального розвитку», 41.

⁶ *Закон про адміністративні послуги 2012* (Верховна Рада України). *Офіційний веб-сайт Верховної Ради України*. <<http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/5203-17>>.

In recent years, cities of Ukraine have significant achievements for organization of administrative services through COAS. It should be noted that Ukrainian leaders in organization of such Centers are Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lutsk and Kharkiv City Councils¹.

Currently, most major cities have seen convenience and expediency of administrative services in a separate institution. On the agenda is the issue of improving existing centers, primarily through their automation. Information and communication technologies contribute to effective implementation of the main goal of COAS. As an example, we consider administrative services provided by these centers, in the following areas:

- urban planning and architecture (construction, architecture, urban planning);
- land issues (land use, origin and termination of rights to land, land management, land surveying work);
- passport of a citizen, registration (registration, cancellation of registration, registration and issuance of passports, pasting photos);
- road traffic, vehicles (permission to participate in road traffic, agreements on transportation of dangerous goods);
- family, children, gender relations (guardianship and custody of children, protection of family, motherhood and childhood, the rights of children, a foster family, adoption of children);
- business activities (summer platforms, operation mode of business entity, coordination of trade object location);
- fire safety (declaration of conformity to fire safety requirements);
- issuing copies, extracts of documents (issuing copies, extracts from regulations and session protocols);
- housing, housing register (exercise of the right to housing, social housing and other housing issues);
- utilities (housing inspection, certificate of ownership rights, permits to disconnect from networks, transfer of external networks to balance);
- ecology (permission for pollutant emissions, permission for special water use, declaration on generation of waste);
- labor protection, industrial safety (permission for performance of high hazard works, re-authorization, declaration of conformity);
- social protection (social assistance, subsidies, issuing certificates);
- use of forests (permission for special use of forests);
- self-organization of population (creation of community organizations, registration);
- agriculture (certificate of dairy products);
- sanitary and epidemiological issues (operating permission, conclusions to working, permission for works);
- veterinary issues (operational permission, permission for activities involving animals).

In general, COAS' modernization in Ukraine has quite rapid pace. Thus, many centers now have their own web-sites or social networking pages, some municipal councils have created web-portals for providing administrative centers. However, information kiosks for self-service are still a luxury for most COAS.

Almost all centers have information stands with information about available administrative services and samples of required documents. Most have introduced a service to inform a person about the results of an appeal, which is carried out in "a convenient way for the user, as determined on the day of documents submission". Mostly, informing is done by calling or sending SMS to the subject of appeal on the day service results. An important indicator of quality work of such centers is a public feedback. For this purpose boxes of reviews or book of complaints and suggestions are used, with increasing opportunity to leave comments, complaints or suggestions via electronic resources.

Most of COAS in the major cities of Ukraine provide activity of receptions/information and counseling centers, which increases the quality of service delivery, help customers to navigate in documents, and saves time that will be spent on their processing, as far as it is not easy for people to

¹ Яскевич, А. (2015). *Моніторинг впровадження інструментів електронного урядування в органах місцевого самоврядування*. Вінниця: ГО «Подільська агенція регіонального розвитку», 49.

understand the process of obtaining necessary administrative services. In addition, availability of reception also helps administrators not to waste time on consulting, thus reducing duration of audience and at the same time improving the quality of services.

At the same time the majority of Centers introduced the possibility of an appointment at a reception, increasing the opportunity to do this by electronic means - e-mail, COAS website or personal electronic office. However, the most problematic issue still is the question of introduction of electronic queue, as only a small part of centers (mostly in the cities of regional importance) provided its operation¹.

As a result, we may mark out the following problems that hinder active implementation of e-government tools at local level in Ukraine:

- low level of interest and involvement of citizens in the processes of public administration at local level;
- lack of clear understanding of the management of local public authorities on the need to introduce e-governance in the subordinate authorities (transparency of activities, electronic services, electronic document operation) closed and unclear decision-making processes;
- limited financial resources for purchase of telecommunication equipment and software, and keeping qualified staff of IT-specialists and operation of the centers of administrative services;
- lack of effective coordinating center at national level to provide advice and practical tools for development of e-government at local level and assessing trends of its development.

In addition, further introduction of e-government at local level requires resolution of important issues such as standardization of electronic administrative services, introduction of electronic identification of natural and legal persons in public information and telecommunication systems, formation of a unified approach to introduction of electronic documents and electronic interaction between national and local authorities. E-government reform will succeed only if the vast majority of population has access to created web-resources, sufficient level of awareness and interest in the use of advanced tools of interaction with authorities².

Conclusions and perspectives of further research. Thus, modernization processes continue in Ukraine for implementing e-government at various levels of state power. It is worth noting a number of progressive changes in the use of e-governance tools that are implemented locally. First of all, local public authorities ensured functioning of web-sites which inform citizens about their activities and have elements of feedback. Sphere of relations connected with implementation and operation of electronic document management and use of electronic documents received institutional development at local level. Also, providing of electronic administrative services started locally through the centers of administrative services, ensuring citizens get a wide range of quality administrative services under simplified procedure. Meanwhile, at this time some cities have significant achievements in this area, which should be extended across the country as best practice. This applies primarily to developments in Kyiv and Vinnytsia.

However, the processes of formation of e-government at local level in Ukraine remain uneven and sometimes chaotic. As far as each local public authority has its own experience, introducing those tools it considers necessary. At the state level is still not formed a single comprehensive view on implementation and development of e-government at lower levels of public authority. It is clear that for comprehensiveness changes in this area these processes should be systematized and standardized.

Considering all previously mentioned above, further research in this area will include analysis of problems and trends of introduction e-government at local level in the European Union.

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¹ Яскевич, А. (2015). *Моніторинг впровадження інструментів електронного урядування в органах місцевого самоврядування*. Вінниця: ГО «Подільська агенція регіонального розвитку», 20-21.

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