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THE ESSENCE OF ELECTRONIC DEMOCRACY, ITS PRINCIPLES AND INSTRUMENTARIUM

This paper examines the theoretical approaches to electronic democracy, its significance and the possibilities in its broad and restricted realization during the process of e-government creation and the development of e-governance. The methodological basis of the investigation is an analysis of the theoretical foundations and the international practices applied in order to involve citizens in the decision-making process and data about the electronic participation of citizens gathered by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The practical significance of the present investigation is to define the correlation between the real state of the electronic participation of citizens and the proclaimed purposes of electronic democracy. The problems that make the circumstances around the formation of electronic democracy in Ukrainian more complicated have been defined and directions for the development and improvement of electronic interaction have been offered.

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In recent times, the issues regarding the introduction of e-democracy have been a topic of consideration both in Ukraine and in the advanced countries of the world, in domestic researches published by such names as: M. Vershynin, M. Grachev, V. Huzhva, O. Zahvoiska, T. Kaminska, A. Kaminskyi, V. Kliutsevskyi, K. Linov, I. Lopushynskyi, Y. Oleinyk, M. Pasechnyk, I. Ruban, A. Semenova and others.

At the same time, these domestic studies mostly focus on the practice of introducing the e-democracy without focusing on its connection to the processes of electronic governance, as two of the components behind the functioning of modern civil society.

That is why the purpose of the present paper is to show the interdependence between e-democracy and e-governance in Ukraine as a unified integral direction for the development of Ukraine in the conditions of the formation and development of civil society.

If we consider e-democracy as a characteristic of the social system, then it should be interpreted as a kind of democracy in general. In this context, it is worth mentioning the opinion of M. Vershynin, a communication researcher, who notes that the "electronic democracy" is a democratic political system, where computers and computer networks are being used to fulfill the most important functions of the democratic process, such as the distribution of information, communication, union

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of the interests of the citizens and the adoption of political decisions” (Vershinin, 2004, p. 98). Wikipedia gives a similar definition within a content framework, interpreting e-democracy as a form, characterized by the usage of ICT as a primary tool in collective and governance processes at all levels, starting from the level of local self-governance and going all the way up to the international level.

The representatives of the second approach towards electronic democracy consider it as a system of relations or communications. The same interpretation is given in the Ukrainian legislation, giving it the meaning of a form of social relations, where individuals and organizations are involved in state and local self-governance through the widespread usage of ICT (On Approval of the Strategy of the Information Society Development in Ukraine, 2013). The researcher M. Grachev takes on the same approach, offering to interpret such a democracy as a mechanism for communication that contributes to the implementation of the principle of the power of the people and leads to a state structure that corresponds to the real needs of the information-oriented society (Grachev, 2004).

The supporters of the electronization processes maintain the position that the electronic democracy should be considered as a mechanism for expression of one’s will with the help of ICT. In this respect, democracy is understood as a state governance activity for strengthening democracy through the electronization of the interaction between the three sectors. When describing the term “electronic democracy”, the domestic researches note the following: “To a great extent, it means a possibility to involve citizens for a more active participation in societal matters through the use of computers, and similar technologies and communication networks” (Minosian, Chorna, Korshunova). Or, for example, “E-democracy consists of all electronic means of communication that allow citizens to take the necessary steps to make sure that politicians take responsibility for their actions in the area of social life” (Silenko, 2007, p. 97).

Electronic democracy is an instrument that is in the possession of all subjects of politics. In our opinion, in this context, e-democracy should be understood as an activity of the subjects of politics aimed at the intensification of their relations with citizens through the use of informative and communicative means and instruments, and it is aimed towards the popularization of the subject of politics.

The Ukrainian researcher V. Huzhva defines two approaches for the interpretation of electronic democracy. In the restricted sense, electronic democracy is the usage of ICT to provide (electronic maintenance) citizens with their rights. Pursuant to the wide approach, the electronic democracy is interpreted as the involvement of the citizens in solving different political and social problems through the usage of modern ICT (Huzhva, 2016, p. 209).

In the author’s opinion, a modern “democracy” in the state governance should be considered as a wide complex of instruments, where hardware and software technology are being used to expand the possibilities of each citizen to develop and improve their main values and to form the latest democracy values, for example: distribution of information and publication of data, formation of citizens groups

pursuant to their interests and participation in the state governance, holding forums, discussions, meetings, votes and elections. Herewith, a widespread usage of the endless Internet possibilities will make it possible to speak about the formation of a new form of democracy – an electronic network. In this case, the terms “electronic” and “net” show that the new form of democracy is based on the usage of network computer technology that has a beneficial effect on the implementation of the democracy principles and the state-based processes that allow it to be in conformity with the government and the modern demands of the information-oriented society (Grachev, 2004, p. 1).

The emergence of the concept of “electronic democracy” is tightly connected to the modern concept of “e-governance” that makes it possible to define various scientific theoretical approaches to its practical implementation. Taking into consideration the fact that the analyzed concept is, on the one hand, a continuation of the development of the general democracy theory and, on the other hand, is performed through the intensive usage of Information & Communication Technology, there is an essential gap between the potential of this concept and the implementation of its ideas. The abovementioned is leading to this questionable understanding of the essence of the modern form of democracy and it causes radically different positions and interests within the social and state sectors of state governance.

Moreover, these two concepts which exist simultaneously and, at first glance, complement each other and make possible the transition of the government towards becoming an information-oriented society, in fact, carry out a battle for superiority and dominance.

In the case of state policy which regards such a concept predominantly as “e-governance”, the electronic democracy is only an element of the e-government. And in spite of the fact that it will have superiority in this concept, one way or the other, it will be considered only as a part of e-government and as an electronic realization of democratic paths or the process adopting state decisions. In line with such a stance, the electronic democracy refers to the technological aspects, for example, the enhanced usage of ICT in the state governance activity. Thus, technology in itself does not strengthen democracy and democratic processes.

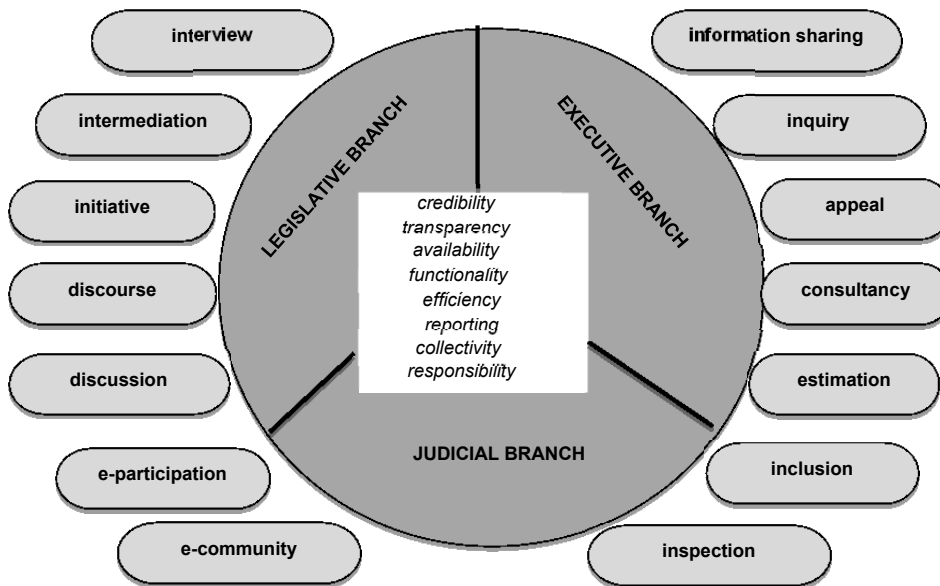
If the state chooses an “electronic democracy” vector of concept predominance, the “e-government” becomes a part of such democracy. It is a key element, but it is not performed to the fullest extent, as electronic democracy is realized through the interaction of government authorities with citizens, using ICT, and it involves the whole sphere of social-networking cooperation with the help of ICT.

Within this framework, the purpose of electronic democracy (CM/Rec, 2009, p. 7-8) coincides with the purpose of e-governance (see Figure 1), wherein the relationships among government authorities, citizens and business are based on equal coordinated actions at all levels, starting from the local and reaching the international level, where the first line is an interaction directed at the realization of state governance activity by the government authorities for the performance of state services, especially the provision of administrative services to the parties of

referral. The second one is the following: citizens participate during the making of state decisions on the basis of information obtained from the government authorities and they control the correspondence between the state policy priorities and their own priorities.

Figure 1

Purposes and instrumentarium of electronic democracy



The area of realization of the purposes of electronic democracy includes all three branches of state power: legislative, judicial and executive. As the requirements of democracy are the driving force behind electronic democracy, ICT should be considered as a means for breaking new ground not only for the modernization, optimization and accounting of government affairs, but also as a means for attracting citizens and encouraging them to participate in the making of state decisions. Nowadays, almost all democratic countries have taken on the responsibility of developing electronic democracy as a form of societal organization, where citizens and business are equal participants during the process of making state decisions through the use of ICT.

Electronic democracy is an integral component of informational society that allows the use of innovative instruments in order to significantly simplify the process of exercising one's rights for participation in social and governmental life, it enhances the process of strengthening democracy and it helps civil society and the government authorities to interact successfully.

The instrumentarium of electronic democracy helps expand the circle of participants and the creation of more collective forms of making state decisions. With the help of modern technology, the participation in democratic processes takes on the form of equality that allows one's voice to be heard by all individuals and groups. In other words, the electronic participation of citizens in the governance opens up opportunities for them to formulate their own requirements and makes it possible for individuals and groups who are faced with various limitations in their everyday lives (citizens with disabilities or with special needs) to submit their offers regarding the state policy. In such a situation, the instrumentarium of electronic democracy is a practical mechanism for creating social unity.

Undoubtedly, the instrumentarium of electronic democracy is able to take democracy to a new and enhanced level, distributing it in those sectors of government, where the institutions of civil society are intensively involved and participate in the process of state governance. The strength of the instrumentarium of electronic democracy means the constant dialog, consultation, discussion and creation of open platforms, on which the citizens and the government authorities can collaborate.

Among the most desirable and popular electronic democracy tools that are being used in international practice, we can define the following:

- *Collection of signatures for petitions* in support of initiatives offered by citizens that are to be put into consideration by the government authorities, under whose jurisdiction there is a petition, and acting as a guarantee for the provision of reasonable and motivated answer to the questions that are interesting for people, business and civil society institutions.

- *Appeals and inquiries* are really efficient tools for the provision of electronic offers regarding the content of the state policy by which concerned parties are able to react in the case of infringements and abusive practices. The government authorities are the guarantee-givers where the efficiency of such tools is concerned.

- *Consultancy* is an opportunity to receive feedback regarding the plans and estimations on the activity of the government authorities and their officials, for example, through the use of questionnaires.

- *Voting* is a tool for the expression of one's will during the elections and referendums at the state, regional and local levels.

This can be achieved through the use of such instruments as an electronic petition – a form of electronic interaction that allows the government authorities to involve active citizens and economic entities in the process of making state decisions. The term “petition” (Shemshuchenko, 1998, Vol. 4, p. 701) is interpreted as a written collective appeal by the citizens concerning a given question which is submitted to the head of state or other government authorities.

The functionality and effectiveness of this instrumentarium was proved for the first time by the Scottish government in the framework of the E-Petitioner project. After Scotland, in order to hear their citizens, Germany, Finland and several other countries followed its example.

Among the most well-known platforms that implement electronic democracy projects we can distinguish the following:

- The platform “Jolitics.com” that imitates the work of the British Parliament with all its necessary stages (project initiation, discussion and voting). This project allows the civil society of Great Britain to present its own initiatives to the state authorities with offers to put forth amendments to the social and political development of the country in accordance with their interests. Nowadays, the platform allows the consideration of such offers at the level of state policy, but in the future, such problems will be discussed at the local level as well. The users of the platform may place their offers as an obligatory subject to be discussed by society and then they can be put up for voting. If the initiative gathers a large enough number of votes, it is then directed for consideration by the Parliament. Moreover, such system of voting allows forecasting what will be the most important issues for citizens in the near future. It is worth noting that, as evidenced by this platform, the citizens have a high level of trust in their government, as it takes into consideration every problem that is put forth by the general public in the discussion, which involves a lot of citizens. We should also pay attention to the organizational aspects of the project. This project has a closed system of registration. In such a system, in order to be registered, one must be initiated by a participant who has already been registered;

- The British project “ePetitions” is a governmental initiative created in order for citizens to put forth offers about the work of the government and to create new projects of regulations. The minimum number of votes required for a petition to be taken into consideration is 100,000.

- The British project “Comment on This”, which has been effective since 2006, is a way for the online community to comment on national state initiatives.

- The project by Harvard University “LexPop” is directed at public discussions regarding the current legislation, norms that require amendment, the discussion of new regulatory acts and the creation of statements that portray individuals’ views on the text of future draft legislation. The electronic interaction between the government and the citizens of Great Britain is enhanced via the daily publication of data which increases the interest and engagement of citizens in the process of making state decisions. The leading place in this regard should be given to a petition about the country’s exit from the EU that was signed by 300,000 British people, and the most successful petition was that against toll roads – it received 1,8 million votes and resulted in the government renouncing the idea.

- The American platform “Popvox” helps to build a dialogue between the government authorities and citizens and it is also a platform for discussion and voting on the concerns of society. This platform does not belong to any party. It makes it possible to keep a record of all estimations and it ensures the prompt delivery of messages to the addressee.

- The American project “Center for the Study of New Media and Society” (CSNMS), is integrated into the activity of the e-government, particularly, in the area of

the organization of a constant network collaboration between government and citizens at the federal, regional and local levels that contains a chronology of the main events in the world. The project is directed at the development, planning and introduction of civil projects, taking into consideration the opinions of society participants that have an impact during the implementation of the electronic democracy generation project. Due to the participation of citizens in the early stages, the government creates a solid foundation for the stable and efficient functioning of electronic communities.

- The American service “Open Government Dialogue” is used on the portals of 33 USA ministries and departments in order to provide efficient feedback and to look for constructive ideas offered by the citizens. This service made it possible to initiate regulatory acts, to comment on legislative initiatives and to vote for the necessity of a particular regulatory act.

- The American portal “We the People”, whose official slogan is “To give all Americans the ability to draw the attention of state authorities to their problems”, is a platform through which citizens can place their appeals to the President.

- The Finnish platform “Open Ministry” allows citizens to compose their own drafts of legislation and to submit them for a vote to the government. Of course, this process of creating new laws is considered to be a limit of the perfection of democracy, contrary to the process where just a narrow circle of Parliament members is engaged in the process of draft composition. A Finnish peculiarity is the existence of petitions that have 50,000 votes and automatically become drafts of legislation. They should be considered by the government of Finland as a matter of priority. One other peculiarity is the possibility to login through the social media platform Facebook and to vote not only “in favor” of placed petitions, but also “against” them.

- The Polish consultative platform “Dobre pomysły” gives the opportunity to publicly monitor the services provided by state authorities and institutions of civil society with permanent, periodical or one-time supervision of the quality of the provided administrative services in order to improve their quality. The peculiarity of this Polish practice lies in the broad functioning of platforms at the local level, which is the most desirable form of mutual dialogue that emphasizes a real readiness for collaboration of state authorities with civil society.

- The Latvian petition that obtained the support of 10,000 votes should be an obligatory part of the agenda of the Seim meeting. In Latvia, the voting on petitions is performed both through the use of electronic resources that present the opportunity to identify a person, and offline.

Despite the fact that the practice of using electronic petitions is rather new, it is in great demand in the different areas of life. It is worth noting that in the different countries the approach towards the introduction of such an electronic democracy instrumentarium has its distinctive aspects, but, in spite of this, the number of involved citizens has been increasing year by year, which is a sign of greater interest of the people in the state policy.

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In practical terms, the electronic democracy has a three-level model, where the levels are the stages of development, as follows:

- I stage – information sharing – government authorities provide citizens with information electronically, through the use of network communication, in order to get their opinions concerning the creation of relevant state policy or the discussion of state decisions;

- II stage – consultancy – is an active interaction of government authorities with citizens on the basis of receiving feedback and storing it, using modern ICT in the processes of making state decisions and creating state policy;

- III stage – active participation of the citizens in the processes of state decision-making – an interaction between citizens and government, in which the government bears the responsibility for state decision-making.

The implementation of the first stage – the sharing and access to the electronic information requires the presence of a legislative environment generated in a consistent manner by the strong institutions of civil society, creating practical mechanisms of control and a society that is aware and able to exercise its rights. The formation and realization of state policy that ensures the freedom of information and the creation of relevant mechanisms of state governance is a responsibility of the government authorities, but the creation of efficient monitoring authorities, under whose jurisdiction there will be an inspection of the legislative execution, the development of democracy and democratic processes require the active participation of civil society.

In order to inform citizens and business entities, the government authorities may use different ways for providing information and different communicative means.

The international practice also has a lot of different forms through which to perform electronic consultancy – starting from the development of the legislative environment of the system and ending with the introduction of non-formal norms and credible practical procedures. The legislative environment may have a more extensive nature, for example, the establishment of an appealing mechanism, the conduction of referendums regarding the problematic issues, and purposive character that entails an obligatory consultation concerning the particular matter with regard to certain societies. The formation of consultative authorities with the participation of the institutions of civil society will contribute to the development of a perspective and to the achievement of more results.

In order to provide citizens and business entities with an electronic interaction, for the purposes of obtaining responses, comments and offers for making governmental decisions, state authorities can use a range of tools (e-questionnaires, forums, seminars for public hearings, submissions of petitions, etc.).

The active participation of the institutions of civil society during the making of state decisions suggests their maturity and ability to prepare and formulate offers. In the case of their active participation, the government authorities need to open

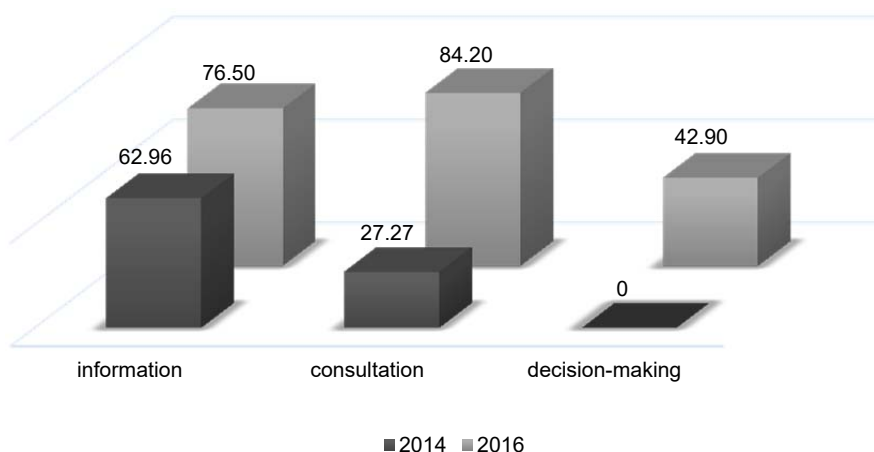
data, publish information and develop the tools for the compilation and analytics of the offers prepared by the institutions of civil society and government authorities. At this stage, the legislative maintenance has a flexible nature, giving citizens the opportunity to form working groups.

In order to define the level of electronic democracy, every two years the Department on Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations conducts a calculation of the index of the electronic participation of citizens, which indicates the stage of government readiness for electronic interaction. Pursuant to the report of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014, p. 241; Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016, p. 175), in 2016 Ukraine ranked 32nd among the 193 countries, with an indicator of 0,7458. In comparison with previous investigations, it is the highest indicator for Ukrainian government up to date, as since 2014 Ukraine has risen by an entire 42 positions.

The government was able to achieve the greatest progress during the 2nd stage – in the electronic participation of citizens in the development of electronic consultations. The indicators have risen by more than three times, starting from 27% and reaching 84%. Considerable changes were also observed during the 3rd stage of the electronic participation of citizens during the process of making state decision. The indicator rose to the level of 50% almost immediately (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Dynamics of the quantitative indicators in Ukraine for the period 2014-2016 (%)



It is worth noting that the obtained results are based on data collected and processed by the Ukrainian Center of Demographic Reforms in 2015 for the purposes

of the report “UN E-Government Survey 2016”. At that point in time, Ukraine witnessed some flurries in the activity of the citizens and, for the first time, there was a demand for new forms of supervision over the governance activity of government authorities.

Thus, the electronic resources created by the government authorities for collaboration with the citizens have a declarative nature and do not give an impetus to the public participation in the processes of the formation and implementation of the state policy. One such electronic resource is the website “Civil society and power” (http://civic.kmu.gov.ua/consult_mvc_kmu/news/article), created for the purpose of holding public discussions through electronic consultations with citizens and business entities, however, in the time of its existence, this electronic resource could not become a platform for a functional and meaningful dialogue among the government authorities, business entities, civil society and individual citizens of Ukraine.

Another electronic resource that did not obtain public recognition was the United Informative Web – a resource for citizens' appeals to the government authorities and the authorities of local self-governance (see Electronic Governance, 2012), created for the immediate and transparent processing of inquiries and appeals by citizens in electronic form, the provision of control on the part of citizens during the consideration of their appeals and inquires for public information, the conduction of analytical work by government authorities and local self-governance over the appeals and inquiries, as well as supervision over the settlement of the raised issues. Despite the declared purpose, this electronic resource did not prove its efficiency; it did not generate any interest or credibility from the side of public society.

As the electronic projects created by the government authorities for the collaboration with citizens and business entities were not able to achieve the desired result, projects for electronic democracy initiated by the citizens started to develop. For example, the project of the Eastern Europe Fund “Open City” (www.opencity.in.ua) is directed at the provision of efficient electronic interaction between local government authorities, citizens and business entities for the settlement of the challenging issues facing society. A significant number of electronic communities of self-organized citizens have emerged, united by a common idea to concentrate their efforts towards the settlement of state issues and problems that have a permanent nature and which do not allow Ukrainian society to develop. Through bringing issues up for discussion regarding the content of the decisions of government authorities, the representatives of civil society actively use the electronic resources that were opened and created under a certain project, or electronic communities that are widely known by the whole Ukrainian society, as well as outside the territory of Ukraine.

Therefore, we can say that an electronic form of participation is forming in the Ukrainian society. Citizens and business entities have a possibility and desire to influence the consideration of any given state decision through the instrumentarium

of electronic democracy and to put forth their own offers for projects regarding the state decisions of government authorities. The considerable number of electronic projects directed at electronic interaction with government authorities is evidence of the interest of citizens and business entities in actively participating in the process of state decision-making.

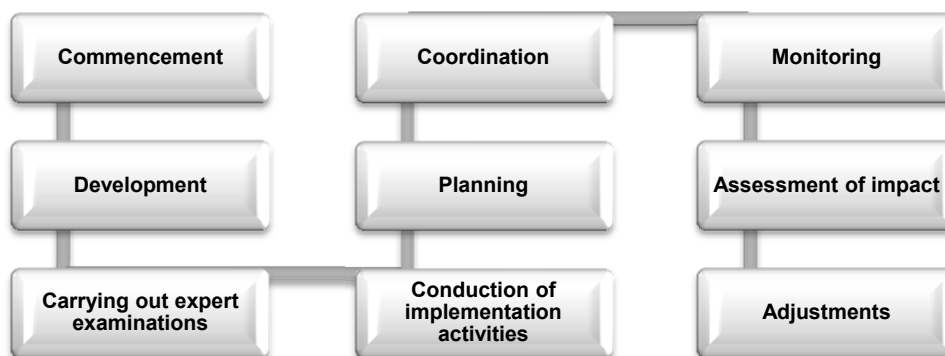
However, an active participation is conditioned by the ability of citizens to have independent discussions and to generate the state vector of development. At the same time, it is necessary that the government authorities develop a clear agenda and act as guarantors of the fact that the proposals submitted by active citizens and business entities as a result of their collaborative efforts will be considered and taken into account during the final stage of the state decision-making process.

It is obvious that the third stage supposes a contribution by each individual to the development of the country. Only several countries are able to use the instrumentarium of electronic democracy successfully.

In the process of the participation of citizens and business entities during the formation, development and implementation of state policy, the most important issue is concerned with the provision and guarantee of the access to the process at all its stages for all interested parties by the government authorities (Figure 3).

Figure 3

The process of implementation of electronic democracy



The possibility to provide initiatives and offers concerning the issues of the development of state policy and state governance should be guaranteed to the civil society at all its levels.

In order to implement further areas of interest that should be taken into account during the formation and implementation of state policy, a fundamental restructuring

and modernization of governance in the direction of achieving a greater openness of the current processes of state policy formation is necessary.

In this regard, the government authorities are faced with the task of mastering the modern tools of collaboration. Particularly, to organize projects and discussions about challenging issues, tasks and the coordination of the vector followed by state policy and state governance, citizens and the institutions of civil society. Moreover, the issue of keeping record of the votes and the change in positions of the wide range of concerned parties is becoming more acute. As a result, the government authorities are faced with another issue regarding the conduction of permanent monitoring of public interests in the electronic communities.

The instrumentarium for the development of electronic democracy may become the introduction of Blockchain Technology.

There are various ways of defining the term blockchain:

- a data storage method;
- a digital register of transactions, agreements and contracts;
- a card register, where data about any transactions is being recorded and encrypted in a special way;
- a public database of all transactions that have ever been performed in the system.

However, all of them come down to the unified principle of the operation of this technology, namely, the creation of formed blocks of transaction information, pursuant to the specific rules of the chain designed for the determination of the exchange relations.

Blockchain Technology allows preserving almost everything that requires a separate independent record and, if necessary, a checkup. It is possible to store data about given credits, property rights, traffic violations, previously granted loans, marriages, etc.

The main distinguishing feature and undeniable advantage is that the data registers based on Blockchain Technology are not being saved in one place, they are distributed among several thousands of computers all over the world which will give IT specialists the opportunity to work on a non-centralized basis.

The second thing that should be attributed to the advantages of technology is the provision of uninterrupted and rational formation of chains based on smart-contracts. For example, the business sector represents it in the following way: you can reserve the amount on the buyer's account and when the automatic goods tracking system reports that the delivery has been completed, the money is then written off to the seller's account. The transaction is performed without paying interest to the bank, and the automated process excludes any failures and delays. At the same time, participants are instantly informed with the help of the register, without wasting time for credit checkups.

Blockchain Technology also allows controlling the whole entire logistics chain of the process from the manufacturer to the final consumer, thus eliminating the possibility of corruption.

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The electronic participation of citizens, civil society and businesses in the processes of state governance should be based on the strict observance of the following principles of attraction (Figure 4) (OECD, 2001, p. 7-8). Without strict following and observance of given principles, it is impossible to pass to the third level of electronic interaction as a perfect form in a country.

Figure 4

Principles of electronic democracy



Due to the abovementioned principles, the following conclusions can be made:

1. Governance, attention and demanding responsibility for the provision of information, consultations and active participation during the making of state decisions are important at the all levels of state governance.

2. The purposes, tasks, borders and obligations of citizens at all three stages should be defined beforehand. They should be current, clear, comprehensible and relevant.

3. Sufficiency of financial, human, technical and technological resources for effective public information-sharing, consultation and active participation in the process of discussing and adopting government decisions.

4. Government authorities are obliged to report on the usage of data received from citizens, on feedbacks, public consultations and active participation.

5. Legislation should clearly define the rights of citizens regarding the access to information, the provision of feedbacks, consultation and active participation in the consideration of state decisions. The obligations of the government authorities to fulfill the rights of the citizens should also be clearly defined. Independent monitoring institutions are extremely necessary to ensure these rights.

6. Consultations and active participation should be included as soon as possible for the further productive dialogue, and also, they should not be limited in time.

7. Initiatives for information-sharing with citizens, reception of their feedback and consultations should be agreed upon among government authorities to improve data management.

8. Government authorities, when adapting to the new criteria and conditions for the reviewing of state decisions, need to have new methods and possibilities to estimate their activity in the area of information-sharing, consultations and the attraction of citizens.

9. Data provided by the government authorities during the consideration of state decisions should be impartial, full and available.

10. A sustainable resource for a country is reflected in the active involvement of citizens and business entities, which are the source and generator of ideas for establishing an interaction between the government authorities and citizens with the purpose of creating a coordinated state policy.

In addition to the non-observance and non-adherence to the principles of electronic democracy, the weakness of the existing instrumentarium for the participation of citizens in the process of the formation and implementation of state policy can be explained with the systemic problems of the organizational aspect of the activity of the government authorities, the requirements for state activity and the existing competence of officials.

One of the first issues that should be settled in order to strengthen electronic democracy and the participation of citizens in the governance process is the problem of the identification of citizens. In order to achieve the interaction between citizens and government authorities, the citizens should have the ability to identify themselves, and this identification should ensure the safety of personal data and give citizens the opportunity participate in discussions on the Internet.

The second issue is the digital gap. Different social groups on the opposite sides are involved in the usage of ICT. A low level of computer literacy does not help to attract citizens for the efficient dialogue with government authorities.

Then, as a rule, the instrumentarium of electronic democracy and the results obtained on its basis are not taken into account. The reactions of the government authorities to the electronic offers and comments of citizens have a formal nature.

The status of electronic circulation also remains uncertain. A citizen can express his/her opinion or leave a comment concerning any problem on the website of the state authority and send it through e-mail, but this letter in electronic form is not considered to be an official petition. The information that was sent to the authority of state governance in electronic form may only be taken into consideration.

The usage of the instrumentarium for the electronic attraction of citizens does not automatically guarantee the successful operation of the electronic democracy. Even if the considered instrumentarium creates forms of electronic interaction such

as G2B (between government authorities and business), G2C (between government authorities and citizens), G2G (interdepartmental interaction between government authorities), B2B (interactions within the business sector) and C2C (interactions between citizens), the society still needs to overcome the various difficulties in organization, worldview, political nature, etc. The main reasons for the introduction of the instrumentarium for the electronic attraction of citizens are:

- Scale of activities. The citizens are interested in the technological possibility to express their opinion, their position and to be heard by others. But, the state policy should take concrete steps and provide technology that is able to facilitate the formation and operation of electronic communities, which help to transform the vote of an individual person into a vote of the society. Herein, the government authorities are faced with the task to create a mechanism of response to discussions (Keddi, Verhes, 2009, p. 19).

- Capability. This problem toughens the requirements concerning the provision of more reliable information to society than the ability of citizens to be involved in the process of governance. "The comprehensible clear information and the ability to participate in public debates, supplemented with such tools as controlled discussion forums, are the main background factors. Herewith, there exists a close connection between the problems regarding the narrowing of the digital gap and the attraction of groups that are traditionally deprived of civil rights (socially disadvantaged, youth) for the process of policy formulation. The challenge lies in the development of such elements of electronic attraction that would give citizens the ability to participate in the joint formulation and adoption of decisions, to realize its importance and to be socially proactive" (Keddi, Verhes, 2009, p. 20).

- Sequence. The stages of the formulation of the state policy (information-sharing, consultancy, guarantee of participation, feedbacks and estimation) should be supported through the electronic communications. "The position of citizens at each stage should be used in a proper manner at the other stages of the process as well. It is necessary, as it will present an opportunity to formulate a policy and to share information with citizens in better ways" (Keddi, Verhes, 2009, p. 24).

- Estimation of attraction. It is a factor that defines the consequences of the participation of citizens in the governance through the use of ICT, the compliance of society purposes to the government purposes and the achievement of results. The objects and criteria of estimation must be formulated too, as without them it is impossible to estimate the results of the operation of the electronic democracy and, in particular, to make progress in its development (Keddi, Verhes, 2009, p. 23).

- Readiness. The government authorities should organize their activity pursuant to the circumstances of the information-oriented society. A provision of administrative services, advisory services, transactions, etc. in electronic form should become a common practice and it should be constantly developing (Keddi, Verhes, 2009, p. 24).

As it is advisable for the development of the new instrumentarium of electronic democracy to be implemented on the basis of impressive practices and

introduced inaugural and demonstration projects, it is necessary to pay attention to both the existing projects and the ones that hold promise. Only the active citizens and institutions of civil society will determine the priority ways for their attraction. This process should be started with the investigation and summarization of the numerous public initiatives, in order to identify the most potentially successful and important initiatives that should be supported at the formation stage, as well as be developed and protected legislatively.

Conclusions

The modern ICT makes it possible to considerably expand the functional content of democracy in state governance. The instrumentarium of electronic democracy opens a wide range of opportunities in front of citizens and business entities during the adoption of state decisions, following the three-level model for the attraction of citizens: sharing information about the state and direction of the development of state policy and about the current state problems; consultation – the establishment and development of interrelations between the government authorities and the institutions of civil society; active participation – a direct influence on the formation and adoption of state decisions.

A strict following of the purposes of electronic democracy and observance of its key principles will obviously lead to the balanced formation and development of an interaction between government authorities and the institutions of civil society, it will increase the level of trust that the citizens hold towards the state authorities and it will make it possible to achieve transparency in their activity.

The analysis of the dynamics of the quantitative indicators of electronic democracy in Ukraine is a testament to the crucial changes observed in the period 2014-2016, but the country has rather low-level indicators in comparison with those of the developed countries of the world, which in turn means that participation of citizens in Ukraine is predominantly passive.

On their way to achieving a perfect electronic interaction, the developed countries of the world are competing, using the vast instrumentarium of electronic democracy in their practice. Its potential is rather big.

Unfortunately, Ukraine is among the countries that are unable to overcome the digital gap and develop their own system-wide approach for an electronic interaction with citizens and business entities. Moreover, the high index of electronic participation reflects only the nominal progress of government authorities in the achievements of the first and second stage which, in practice, do not reflect democratic values and processes.

Nowadays, the electronic participation of citizens and business entities has a nominal nature and it is still at the stage of forming an agenda, conducting an analysis and making estimations about the received feedback.

The influence and participation of citizens and business entities in the processes of the adoption of state decisions is rather problematic for the circumstances in

Ukraine. The crucial obstacles in the way of the implementation of the electronic democracy are reflected in the problem of the digital gap that leads to the non-conformity of the declared purposes of the electronic democracy with the reality. It will lead to an increase in inequality and a further concentration of the power and influence of prominent political and governmental figures.

A considerable advantage of electronic interaction in the process of the development, implementation and estimation of state policy is the crucial cost-cutting of democratic procedures through the intensive use of ICT which makes it possible to save on significant financial and time resources and to increase the number of participants in the interaction.

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