

## SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

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### PERSPEKTYWY ROZWOJU DEMOKRACJI DELIBERACYJNEJ NA UKRAINIE

**Viktoriiia Medvedska**

*aspirantka Katedry Politologii Wydziału Filozoficznego Kijowskiego Uniwersytetu Narodowego  
imienia Tarasa Szewczenki  
(Kijów, Ukraina)*

*ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6817-155X,*

*e-mail: viktoriiia.medvedsk@gmail.com*

**Анотация.** W artykule przeanalizowano cechy interakcji społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i władz państwowych na Ukrainie oraz nakreślono perspektywy i priorytetowe kierunki rozwoju demokracji deliberacyjnej na Ukrainie. Autor przedstawił stan tworzenia deliberacyjnego dialogu w sieciach społecznościowych, co ma ogromne znaczenie dla tworzenia społeczeństwa obywatelskiego na Ukrainie.

Aby osiągnąć wyznaczony cel badań naukowych, zastosowano ogólne teoretyczne i specyficzne metody badawcze, w szczególności opisowe, systemowe, strukturalne i funkcjonalne.

W artykule podkreślono potencjalne sposoby poprawy skuteczności konsultacji w ramach demokracji deliberacyjnej. Autor podkreśla, że dziś społeczeństwo ukraińskie jest gotowe do stopniowego wdrażania elementów demokracji deliberacyjnej, co doprowadzi do racjonalnej komunikacji między władzami a społeczeństwem obywatelskim, oraz przyczyni się do ich przejrzystości i skutecznej interakcji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** demokracja deliberacyjna, dialog deliberacyjny, społeczeństwo obywatelskie, deliberacja internetowa, władze państwowe, współczesne społeczeństwo ukraińskie.

### PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE

**Viktoriiia Medvedska**

*Postgraduate Student at the Political Science Department  
of the Faculty of Philosophy  
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Kyiv, Ukraine)*

*ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6817-155X*

*e-mail: viktoriiia.medvedsk@gmail.com*

**Abstract.** The article analyzes the features of the interaction between civil society and public authorities in Ukraine and outlines the prospects and priorities for the development of deliberative democracy in Ukraine. The author outlines the state of formation of deliberative dialogue in social networks, which is of great importance for the formation of civil society in Ukraine.

To achieve the goal of scientific research, general theoretical and specific research methods were used, in particular descriptive, systemic, structural and functional.

The article highlights potential ways to increase the effectiveness of consultations within a deliberative democracy. The author emphasizes that today Ukrainian society is ready for the gradual introduction of elements of deliberative democracy, which will lead to rational communication between public authorities and civil society, as well as promote their transparent and effective interaction.

**Key words:** deliberative democracy, deliberative dialogue, civil society, online-deliberation, state government bodies, modern Ukrainian society.

### ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ РОЗВИТКУ ДЕЛІБЕРАТИВНОЇ ДЕМОКРАТІЇ В УКРАЇНІ

**Вікторія Медведська**

*аспірантка кафедри політології  
філософського факультету  
Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка (Київ, Україна)*

*ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6817-155X*

*e-mail: viktoriiia.medvedsk@gmail.com*

**Анотация.** У статті проаналізовано особливості взаємодії громадянського суспільства та органів державної влади в Україні та окреслено перспективи і пріоритетні напрями для розвитку деліберативної демократії на тере-

нах України. Автором окреслено стан формування деліберативного діалогу в соціальних мережах, що має велике значення для формування громадянського суспільства в Україні.

Для досягнення поставленої мети наукового дослідження використовувалися загально-теоретичні та специфічні методи дослідження, зокрема описовий, системний, структурно-функціональний.

У статті виокремлено потенційні шляхи підвищення ефективності проведення консультацій у межах деліберативної демократії. Автор підкреслює, що сьогодні українське суспільство готове до поступового впровадження елементів деліберативної демократії, що приведе до раціональної комунікації між органами державної влади та громадянським суспільством, а також сприятиме їх транспарентній та ефективній взаємодії.

**Ключові слова:** деліберативна демократія, деліберативний діалог, громадянське суспільство, онлайн-делібератія, органи державної влади, сучасне українське суспільство.

**Introduction.** The development and rooting of democracy occurs simultaneously with social transformations in the state. A developed civil society is an extremely important condition for the establishment of a stable democracy. Ukraine is still at the stage of democratic transit, for which the formation of civic consciousness and the development of civic education has become one of the most difficult tasks. At the same time, the process of democratization in Ukraine is characterized by constant challenges, contradictions between traditional and modern implementation of political governance. The inherent lack of an appropriate level of deliberative dialogue in Ukrainian society raises the issue of the introduction of deliberative mechanisms of democracy and the direct implementation of deliberative democracy in Ukraine. Regulatory dialogue between public authorities and civil society will be a driving factor for deliberative transit in Ukraine, which aims to involve citizens and take into account the views of civil society in political decision-making and in the process of forming the political system.

In this regard, the provision of new forms of the process of rooting democracy in Ukraine, in particular, the practical transformation to deliberative democracy, is urgent.

**The purpose of the article** is to analyze the prospects for the development of deliberative democracy in Ukraine. Achieving a certain goal requires solving **the following tasks:**

1. To outline the state of interaction between civil society and public authorities in Ukraine.
2. To suggest ways to involve citizens in the deliberative process in Ukraine.
3. Describe the state of development of online deliberation and identify promising areas for the development of deliberative democracy in Ukraine.

To achieve the goal of scientific research, general theoretical and specific research methods were used, in particular descriptive, systemic, structural and functional. The method of interpretation was used to summarize the data of statistical studies. The system method allowed to consider online deliberation as a complex and multifaceted process with its inherent features of functioning. The deductive method was used to substantiate the findings of the study.

**The main research material.** Deliberative democracy is based on political theory, which argues that political decisions must be the result of fair and informed discussion among citizens (OECD, 2020). The involvement of civil society in the political decision-making process is the basis of effective deliberative democracy. However, scholars often criticize and question the practical implementation of such a democracy. In some cases, deliberative democracy is defined as a utopian political regime.

Deliberative democracy, mediated by the tools of interaction between public authorities and civil society, has real potential for its possible emergence and continued existence.

Today there are many initiatives, programs in Ukraine, which conduct research, surveys on the involvement of Ukrainians and participation in public activities. For example, the «Join!» (USAID / ENGAGE) conducted a public engagement survey to examine Ukrainians' awareness of civic initiatives and participation, attitudes toward civil society, perceptions, and participation in the reform process. In addition to questions about awareness and participation in public activities, surveys of Kharkiv region residents were conducted regarding their values and beliefs. The survey found that Kharkiv residents have a high level of knowledge about how they can participate in the lives of their communities, although these figures are slightly lower than national ones. First of all, Kharkiv respondents single out participation in peaceful assemblies with a specific purpose (69%), creation of a house, street or neighborhood committee or participation in their work (63%) and filing complaints with local authorities on infrastructure issues (59%). At the national level, these figures are 75%, 71% and 69%, respectively (USAID, 2021).

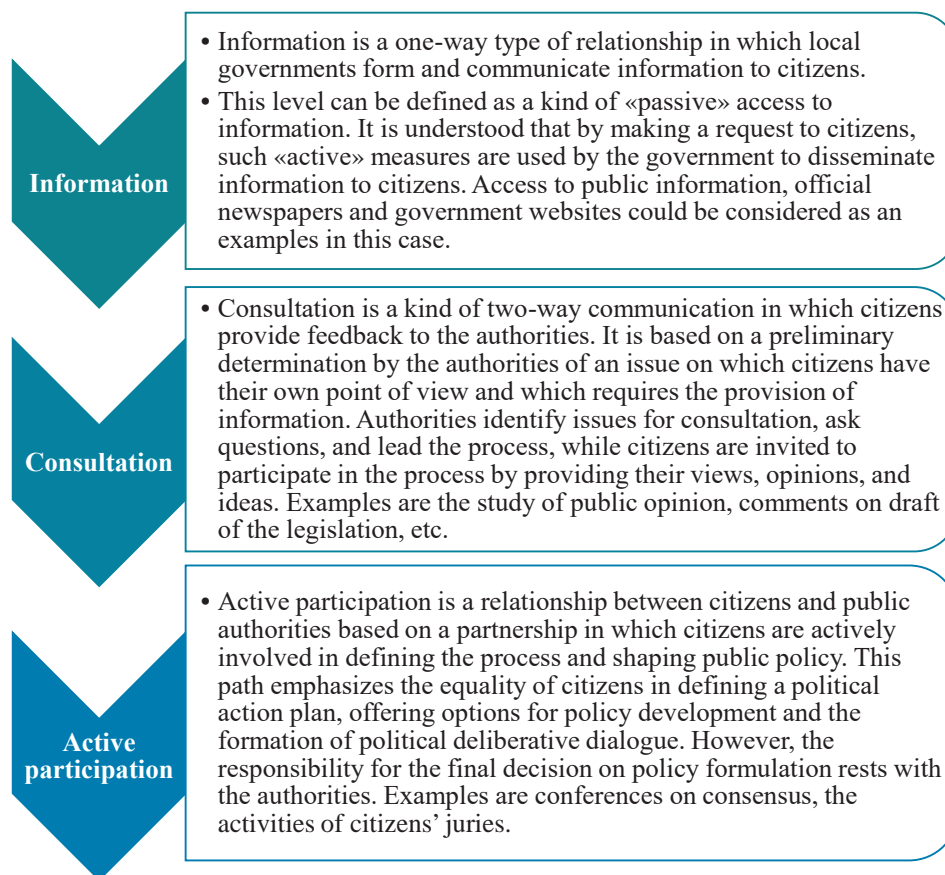
At the practical level, the interaction of public authorities and civil society is a crucial factor for the development of public capacity, accountability and response. In particular, the availability of consultations and dialogue between the state and citizens can improve public understanding and support for public policy and stimulate civic responsibility for reforms. Without public support, governments often have no way to achieve their goals; accountability, access to information and transparency of public authorities are important to enable citizens to control and hold public institutions accountable.

Without partnership and interaction between the authorities and citizens and without the functioning of bilateral dialogue, it is impossible to imagine how states will respond to socially significant needs and expectations. The presence of such communication allows citizens to initiate discussions of political projects, influence political decisions and exercise control over the activities of the state (Kochubei, 2019: 110).

The executive, local governments, members of the public and the expert community have a number of opportunities to join forces to address the development of a deliberative society. In particular, one of the promising mechanisms for increasing the level of citizen involvement in political decision-making is the functioning of a network

of public councils that are able to accumulate and properly promote public initiatives. The effective operation of these advisory bodies can reduce the severity of political and ideological confrontations, minimize the influence of external destructive forces, provide the leadership of the regions with powerful weapons – reasoned, properly enriched and presented opinion of members of the local community.

Figure 1 proposes potential ways to build relationships between citizens and local governments from providing information through counseling to the active participation of citizens in the Ukrainian deliberative process. Graph 1 includes examples of methodology for involving and influencing citizens. For example, access to public information, official newspapers, government websites, public opinion polls, commenting on draft legislation, consensus conferences and the possibility of public juries.



**Fig. 1. Ways to increase the level of citizen involvement in the deliberative process in Ukraine**

A joint study by the British Council in Ukraine, the Laboratory of Legislative Initiatives, the Association for Socio-Economic Strategies and Partnerships to implement the principles and mechanisms for cooperation between government and the public on the ground, provided by the Council of Europe Code of Best Practice and in order to increase the level of involvement of citizens in the deliberative process, the following recommendations were formed.

1. Public consultations should take place in various formats (public hearings, round tables, social and expert surveys, online deliberation, questionnaires, work of public receptions and trust boxes, trainings and seminars, public expertise, holding public receptions by public organizations with further communicating the positions of citizens to local authorities in the form of information notes, etc.) (Brytanska Rada v Ukraini, 2012: 41).

2. It is recommended that public consultations need to be conducted in accordance with the statutes of local communities and on the basis of a developed plan.

3. It is advisable to organize an effective awareness campaign before public consultations with local authorities and public organizations.

4. Effectively hold consultations at a convenient time for citizens.

5. It is important that local authorities constantly inform public organizations and the community about the regulations considered and adopted by them.

6. Representatives of local authorities shall take part in rallies organized in the relevant territory.

7. The intensity and content of public consultations should not depend on the political struggle in the region.

8. Local authorities should carefully identify experts for expert advice. Therefore, for the interaction of local authorities and citizens, it is advisable to create an electronic database of industry experts who can be contacted on a specific issue.

9. Individual citizens should be provided with the right to apply to a local authority or a specific elected representative through the media. At the same time, both citizens and NGOs should be able to put an important issue on the agenda of the session of the relevant local council (Brytanska Rada v Ukraini, 2012: 42).

Given the recent increase in the number of registered NGOs, the increasing participation in discussions of publications of political forces, government officials and citizens on social networks, the public's desire to have transparent access to public information and policy decisions, we can say that now the best and the most favorable times for the introduction of elements of deliberation in decision-making processes in Ukraine. In particular, the fact that civil society in our country is sufficiently developed, and its interaction with local authorities is not effective enough now, allows the implementation of new approaches, which, of course, includes deliberation. Given the diversity of forms and methods of implementing deliberative democracy, our country have to adapt and develop its own methods and approaches, and possibly create new ones.

Today, deliberative dialogue is actively formed in social networks, which is of great importance for the formation of civil society in Ukraine at this stage of its development, as it ensures the implementation of an important principle of a democratic society. This principle is that citizens should communicate on political topics in the form of a rational discourse focused on mutual understanding.

Deliberative online communications are becoming increasingly important in the process of democratization of Ukrainian society, because they provide intensification of political discussions, freedom of access to political information, increase the level of deliberative democracy, promote interaction between public authorities and civil society institutions.

In particular, on April 8, 2021, the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting (IER) held the conference «The Impact of COVID-19 on the Instruments of Local Democracy» within the project «Strengthening the Role of Civil Society Organizations in Democratization of Ukraine». The conference consisted of three discussion blocks on local democracy, volunteer movements and analytical centers in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (Instytut ekonomichnykh doslidzhen ta politychnykh konsultatsii, 2021).

The conference addressed the functioning of local democracy mechanisms in quarantine, and its adaptation, which is the basis for the implementation of instruments of deliberative democracy. Olga Gvozdyk, the founder of the Misto-Sad NGO, noted that most city councils broadcast' live. During the pandemic, meetings of deputy commissions took place in online services. The public can watch the voting online. Lack of quality coverage and limited resources, including human resources, are major challenges for rural communities (Instytut ekonomichnykh doslidzhen ta politychnykh konsultatsii, 2021).

At the same time, the statements of Natalia Drozd, head of the NGO «DOBROCHYN Center for Social Welfare», were valuable for the functioning of online deliberation. Natalia stressed that the united territorial community has opened several groups on Facebook and Viber, where everyone can write about the problems. And this permits feedback between government and citizens.

However, such a situation, as Ms. Drozd emphasized, is only in those communities where material and human capacities exists. In rural communities the situation is much worse. Internet access is not always available. According to the speaker, this is a question for the state, which should ensure equal access to the Internet, and only then can we talk about the access of citizens (Instytut ekonomichnykh doslidzhen ta politychnykh konsultatsii, 2021).

It should be emphasized that in order to implement online deliberation and increase the effectiveness of interaction between government and citizens in the democratization of society, it is necessary to overcome the problem of digital inequality in regional development, improve the legal regulation of Internet communications, protect intellectual property and information confidentiality. In particular, a number of deliberative mechanisms in communication with the authorities function effectively. For example, the participation budget in electronic format, an electronic petition, the chairman's report on websites and social networks, requests for public information, citizens' appeals, public consultations launched through social networks.

At the same time, the threats that arise in the development of Internet communications, including threats to information security of citizens and the state as a whole, increasing control over citizens by the government, manipulation of public opinion, distortion of information, abuse of information power should not be underestimated.

Given the above described features of the development of the deliberative process in Ukraine, it is necessary to identify the following prospective areas for the development of deliberative democracy in Ukraine.

1. At the regulatory level, it is necessary to determine the list of basic mechanisms for deliberative dialogue between civil society and public authorities.

2. To legislate legal liability for improper compliance with procedural rules of communication between the government and citizens.

3. To specify the issues on which it is possible to initiate deliberative consultations, discussions and during which the opinion of citizens will be taken into account.

4. To legislate the provisions on mandatory reporting by public authorities and coverage of decisions taken during consultations or discussions with citizens. And thus oblige the authorities to prepare regular reports on the effectiveness of the implementation of deliberative mechanisms.

5. To provide tools to ensure the representativeness of different social groups in public consultations, as well as consider the possibility of introducing voluntary registration by the relevant authorities of interested persons to participate in consultations with full disclosure of information about such persons.

6. To consider the alternative adoption of a law that would regulate the implementation and functioning of the mechanisms of deliberative democracy, the peculiarities of deliberative dialogue, and so on.

7. To promote the development of online deliberative democracy and implement comprehensive measures to develop virtual deliberative communications and increase their role in political interaction.

Unfortunately, today deliberative dialogue in the form of public consultations has not yet gained sufficient «popularity» neither among government officials nor among the public. Existing public hearings are organized and conducted, at best, through official websites or using local media (if available). This practice is implemented mainly by posting draft decisions. Quite a simple, but mandatory, procedure for publishing a report of a public discussion on the inclusion or non-consideration of submitted proposals (as well as the publication of the proposals of citizens) is often simply ignored. Without such feedback from the authorities, deliberative dialogue is mostly a formality that means nothing.

It is obvious that the actual use of instruments of deliberative policy will help to increase the level of political, legal, civic culture of the population of Ukraine. Ukraine must move towards the full implementation of deliberative democracy, in particular to be guided by the following principles, according to which the consulting participation of citizens is a key element in ensuring the legitimacy of decisions of executive bodies; only close interaction with citizens can help the authorities to develop optimal ways for self-improvement and improving the quality of their work; the involvement of citizens in deliberative processes is essential for the development of a sense of citizenship, belonging to a particular community.

**Conclusions.** Thus, the prospects for the development of deliberative democracy open up not only in the presence of dialogue between the authorities and civil society, but also in terms of established cooperation, active participation of citizens in political decision-making and public affairs. The development of deliberative democracy is possible with the constant and effective functioning of democratic principles in society. Therefore, this is a problem not only for Ukraine, but also for any democratic country.

To build a deliberative democracy and ensure the observance of democratic standards in Ukrainian society, it is necessary to pay attention to the development of the digital information society. In particular, as the pandemic has made its adjustments in the struggle for democratic consolidation in the world, Ukrainian society must intensify in the direction of improving and functioning of democratic practices.

The main issues that need to be addressed immediately are the systematic dialogue between government and the public, taking into account the views of citizens in decision-making, implementation of e-government, proper administration of online resources, development of civic e-education, improvement of decision-making mechanisms and real functioning of bilateral partnership instruments.

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