LOCAL GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE COURSE OF REFORMING OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND TERRITORIAL SYSTEM IN UKRAINE

Signing of Association Agreement between European Union and Ukraine has activated the process of state authorities’ decentralization in Ukraine. The reformed administrative and territorial system should become the qualitatively new basis to exercise the rights of territorial community.

Goal of the article – is to outline major principles of reforming of administrative and territorial system in Ukraine and to define its influence on conducting of local governance.

Major research findings

In democratic countries organization of local governance is stipulated by objective needs of society development; that means that there should be as much “authority” at local level as it is necessary to maintain living ability of territorial unions (territorial groups, communities, communes, etc) and to solve the issues of local nature. European practice of local governance organization testifies to existence of three institutional levels. Territorial groups (communities, communes) are the initial entities of local governance.

Creation of well-grounded territorial basis for local governance bodies’ and executive authorities’ activity in order to maintain proper quality of public services granted by them is one of the tasks of administrative and territorial reform in Ukraine.

In order to implement in practice the reform of administrative and territorial system the Plan of measures on implementation of the Concept of local governance and territorial authority organization reforming in Ukraine was adopted. It defines the complex of changes that are to be introduced into national legislation (firstly, by expanding Constitution of Ukraine and Tax and Budget Codes of Ukraine in
terms of finances decentralization and strengthening of financial and economic basics of local governance; secondly, by adopting the laws: On voluntary combining of territorial communities, On administrative and territorial system, On local executive authorities, On local referendum, etc.

Consequently, the range of changes to the budget legislation was adopted. Idea of authorities decentralization was supported by adoption of the Law of Ukraine «On cooperation of territorial communities», which defines organizational and legal basis for territorial communities cooperation, principles, forms and mechanism of such cooperation, its promotion, funding and control. Adoption of the Law of Ukraine «On voluntary combining of territorial communities», which regulates relations emerging in the process of villages, towns and cities territorial communities combining, serves as the proof of Ukraine’s course for fundamental changes in administrative and territorial system. Special attention should be paid to terms and principles of territorial communities combining:

historical, natural, ethnical, cultural, etc factors that influence social and economic development of combined territorial community should be taken into consideration when making decisions on voluntary combining of territorial communities;

quality and availability of public services granted in combined territorial community shouldn’t be lower than before the combining.

Population of communities will gain following advantages in case of combining:

subventions and grants from state budget, right to manage local taxes, powers to form communities’ budget and to develop local economy, right to manage land resources, etc.

Conclusions

1. The Concept of local governance and territorial authority organization reforming in Ukraine defines the directions and tasks of domestic administrative and territorial reform that correspond to the world tendencies of state authority
decentralization and will allow overcoming the outdated post-soviet form of territorial management.

2. In case of administrative and territorial reform implementation, citizens of Ukraine can obtain the range of advantages to efficiently and independently solve the problems of local nature, to form own budget and to influence the development of territories’ economy.

3. Along with this, implementation of decentralization tasks in practice requires considering possible obstacles, in particular, практичесне втілення завдань децентралізації потребує урахування можливих перепон, зокрема, opposition of current local authorities’ representatives and local elites, poor quality of local management, poor development of communications, etc.

4. State authorities are bound to activate decentralization processes in Ukraine and to mobilize in order to solve the problems that slow the reform down.