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STRATEGIC GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MECHANISMS IN THE CONDITIONS OF A CRISIS OF INSTITUTIONAL CONFIDENCE

Abstract. A comprehensive study of the theoretical, methodological and applied aspects of the formation of strategic guidelines for the development of public administration mechanisms in the context of a crisis of institutional trust has been carried out. It has been substantiated that institutional trust is not only a socio-psychological category, but an integral indicator of the effectiveness of the functioning of public institutions, which accumulates assessments of their legitimacy, transparency, accountability and effectiveness. It has been determined that the modern crisis of trust is complex in nature and is caused by the interaction of political, economic, social and institutional factors that form systemic imbalances in the interaction of the state and society.

The current state of institutional trust in Ukraine has been analyzed, its asymmetric structure has been revealed, characterized by a high level of trust in security sector institutions and civil society and at the same time a low level of trust



in political and administrative institutions. It is proven that such differentiation limits the state's ability to effectively implement management functions and requires the transformation of public administration mechanisms taking into account the requirements of adaptability, openness and human-centeredness.

The conceptual principles of public administration transformation are revealed, which include the transition from hierarchical to network management models, the integration of digital technologies, the development of co-management mechanisms and the strengthening of communicative interaction between authorities and citizens. The need to improve institutional, organizational and legal mechanisms for ensuring trust is substantiated, in particular by strengthening the institutional capacity of authorities, improving the quality of public services, ensuring the rule of law and developing effective anti-corruption instruments.

Special attention is paid to the analysis of international experience in the formation of institutional trust and the possibilities of its adaptation to national conditions. The expediency of applying the principle of selective adaptation of international experience with an orientation towards increasing transparency, accountability and inclusiveness of management processes is substantiated.

The strategic guidelines for the development of public administration mechanisms are summarized, including: ensuring institutional stability and predictability of policies, developing digital governance, increasing the level of citizen participation in decision-making, forming a culture of trust and responsibility, and strengthening the human resources potential of public administration.

Keywords: public institutions, public governance, public governance mechanisms, institutional trust, crisis of institutional trust, digital governance, strategic development, management efficiency, civil institutions, law enforcement institutions, trust-based management, anti-corruption policy, public authority, anti-corruption tools, electoral orientations.

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СТРАТЕГІЧНІ ОРІЄНТИРИ РОЗВИТКУ МЕХАНІЗМІВ ПУБЛІЧНОГО УПРАВЛІННЯ В УМОВАХ КРИЗИ ІНСТИТУЦІЙНОЇ ДОВІРИ

Анотація. Здійснено комплексне дослідження теоретико-методологічних та прикладних аспектів формування стратегічних орієнтирів розвитку механізмів публічного управління в умовах кризи інституційної довіри. Обґрунтовано, що інституційна довіра виступає не лише соціально-психологічною категорією, а інтегральним індикатором ефективності функціонування публічних інститутів, який акумулює оцінки їх легітимності, прозорості, підзвітності та результативності. Визначено, що сучасна криза довіри має комплексний характер і зумовлена взаємодією політичних, економічних, соціальних та інституційних чинників, що формують системні дисбаланси у взаємодії держави та суспільства.

Проаналізовано сучасний стан інституційної довіри в Україні, виявлено її асиметричну структуру, що характеризується високим рівнем довіри до інституцій сектору безпеки та громадянського суспільства і водночас низьким рівнем довіри до політико-адміністративних інститутів. Доведено, що така диференціація обмежує спроможність держави ефективно реалізовувати управлінські функції та потребує трансформації механізмів публічного управління з урахуванням вимог адаптивності, відкритості та людиноцентризму.

Розкрито концептуальні засади трансформації публічного управління, що передбачають перехід від ієрархічних до мережевих моделей управління, інтеграцію цифрових технологій, розвиток механізмів співуправління та посилення комунікативної взаємодії між владою і громадянами. Обґрунтовано необхідність удосконалення інституційних, організаційних та правових механізмів забезпечення довіри, зокрема шляхом зміцнення інституційної спроможності органів влади, підвищення якості публічних послуг, забезпечення верховенства права та розвитку ефективних антикорупційних інструментів.

Особливу увагу приділено аналізу міжнародного досвіду формування інституційної довіри та можливостям його адаптації до національних умов. Обґрунтовано доцільність застосування принципу селективної адаптації міжнародного досвіду з орієнтацією на посилення прозорості, підзвітності та інклюзивності управлінських процесів.

Узагальнено стратегічні орієнтири розвитку механізмів публічного управління, серед яких виокремлено: забезпечення інституційної стабільності та передбачуваності політики, розвиток цифрового врядування, підвищення рівня участі громадян у прийнятті рішень, формування культури довіри та відповідальності, а також зміцнення кадрового потенціалу публічної адміністрації.



Ключові слова: публічні інституції, публічне врядування, механізми публічного управління, інституційна довіра, криза інституційної довіри, цифрове врядування, стратегічний розвиток, ефективність управління, цивільні інститути, силові інститути, довіроорієнтоване управління, антикорупційна політика, публічна влада, антикорупційні інструменти, електоральні орієнтації.

Statement of the problem. The relevance of the study is due to the deepening of transformation processes in the public administration system of Ukraine, which take place in conditions of prolonged socio-economic and political challenges, in particular martial law, institutional instability and the need for post-war reconstruction. At the same time, the problem of institutional trust as a key factor in the legitimacy of public authorities, the effectiveness of management decisions and ensuring sustainable development of the state acquires particular importance. It is worth noting that the current state of Ukrainian society is characterized by an asymmetric level of trust in various institutions, which is manifested in high support for security and civil institutions while at the same time lacking trust in political, administrative and judicial bodies. This situation forms systemic restrictions for the implementation of state policy, reduces the effectiveness of reforms, complicates the processes of interaction between authorities and civil society and increases the risks of institutional fragmentation. Therefore, the study of strategic guidelines for the development of public administration mechanisms aimed at overcoming the crisis of institutional trust acquires particular importance. It is not only about improving the organizational and legal foundations of the functioning of state institutions, but also about forming new approaches to governance based on the principles of transparency, accountability, openness, digitalization and citizen involvement in decision-making processes.

The relevance of the topic is also enhanced by the need to adapt the national public administration system to European governance standards, which provide for a high level of trust in institutions as a basic condition for democratic development.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. The theoretical foundations of the study of trust as a social and institutional phenomenon have been thoroughly developed in the works of such foreign scholars as N. Luhman, F. Fukuyama, R. Putnam, E. Ostroma. A significant contribution to the understanding of the institutional aspects of trust was also made by D. North and M. Weber. The issues of public administration efficiency, institutional development and the implementation of good governance principles are actively developed in the works of J. Stiglitz, K. Pollitt, G. Bookert. Also important are the developments in the field of digital governance and openness of government, presented in the studies of T. Yan, B. Guy Peters. In domestic scientific thought, a significant contribution to



the study of public administration and institutional transformations was made by V. Bakumenko, V. Kuybida, O. Obolensky, Yu. Surmin, N. Nyzhnyk, who developed the theoretical and methodological principles of the functioning of the public administration system. Issues of institutional trust, state policy, and interaction between government and society are explored in the works of O. Amoshi, V. Geets, A. Kolodiy, S. Kvitka, M. Latynin, and O. Radchenko, who analyze the influence of institutional factors on the effectiveness of management processes.

The purpose and objectives of the article. The goal is to theoretically substantiate and develop strategic guidelines for the development of public administration mechanisms in the context of a crisis of institutional trust based on a comprehensive analysis of its nature, structural features and factors of formation, as well as to determine the directions of transformation of the institutional, organizational and legal principles of the functioning of public authorities in order to increase its efficiency, legitimacy and ability to ensure sustainable development of society.

Presentation of the main material. The increasing complexity of social processes, increased uncertainty and aggravation of socio-political challenges necessitate a rethinking of traditional approaches to the interaction of the state and society, within which trust acts not only as a socio-psychological category, but also as an integral indicator of the quality of public administration, since it accumulates an assessment of the effectiveness, legitimacy, transparency and accountability of government institutions.

The institutional dimension of public administration assumes the presence of both formal institutions - legislative norms, procedures, regulations, state authorities and local self-government bodies, and informal institutions, which include social norms, values, traditions, the level of legal culture and trust. It is the interaction of these elements that determines the quality of the functioning of the management system, its ability to adapt and respond to social challenges.

The transformation of public administration in the direction of the transition from a hierarchical model to network and partnership forms of interaction is of particular importance in modern conditions. Such a transformation involves the expansion of the participation of non-state actors in decision-making processes, the development of co-management mechanisms, as well as the integration of digital technologies into all stages of the management cycle. At the same time, the institutional system of public administration acquires features of openness, flexibility and adaptability. Undoubtedly, the effectiveness of the functioning of public administration, as an institutional system, largely depends on the level of coherence of its elements and their ability to ensure the implementation of socially significant goals. Imbalances between formal and informal institutions, insufficient transparency of procedures, limited level of accountability and weakness of



communication mechanisms lead to a decrease in the effectiveness of management and the formation of a deficit of institutional trust. Therefore, trust acts as both a resource and a result of management activities, forming a closed cycle of interaction, in which increasing efficiency contributes to the growth of trust, and the growth of trust, in turn, increases the effectiveness of the functioning of institutions. This necessitates the comprehensive consideration of these approaches when developing strategic guidelines for the development of public administration mechanisms.

The current state of institutional trust in Ukraine is characterized by a complex, multi-level structure that reflects the specifics of socio-political transformations, intensified by the conditions of martial law and long-term reforms. One of the key trends is the differentiation of trust levels depending on the type of institutions, which allows us to speak about the asymmetric nature of its distribution in society. In the structural dimension, it is advisable to distinguish several groups of institutions by the level of public trust. The highest indicators are consistently demonstrated by institutions of the security and defense sector. According to sociological research by the Razumkov Center (2025), the Armed Forces of Ukraine are trusted by about 90-92% of citizens, the State Emergency Service - over 80%, and the National Guard - about 75-80%. A high level of trust is also observed in civil society institutions: volunteer organizations are trusted by over 80% of respondents, public organizations - by about 60-65%. Such indicators indicate a high legitimacy of institutions that directly provide security and social support to the population.

It should be noted that institutions of political power and public administration are characterized by a significantly lower level of trust. In particular, about 70-75% of citizens do not trust the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Government - by over 65-70%, and political parties - by over 70%. The level of distrust in the judicial system fluctuates within 60-70%, which indicates the persistence of systemic problems in the justice sector. Anti-corruption bodies demonstrate mixed dynamics: the level of trust in NABU, SAPO and NACP remains relatively moderate and, according to various estimates, does not exceed 40-50 %, which indicates insufficient institutional effectiveness or limited public support for their activities.

There is a tendency to note a certain consolidation of trust during periods of heightened external threats. Thus, after the start of full-scale aggression, the level of trust in key state institutions temporarily increased, but later it partially decreased and stabilized at medium levels. This indicates the situational nature of some trusting sentiments that do not transform into stable institutional support.

An important characteristic of the current state of institutional trust is its dependence on the quality of communication between the authorities and citizens. According to the results of surveys, more than 50 % of the population assess the level of transparency of government activities as insufficient, which negatively affects the formation of trust. At the same time, the development of digital services,



in particular e-government, gradually increases the level of citizens' satisfaction with the quality of public services, which may act as a factor in increasing trust in the long term.

Among the structural features of institutional trust in Ukraine, it is also appropriate to note its regional heterogeneity. According to sociological research, the level of trust in local authorities is relatively higher (about 50-60 %) compared to central authorities, which is explained by closer interaction of citizens with local self-government bodies and a higher level of personification of power at the local level.

The crisis of institutional trust in Ukraine is the result of a complex interaction of political, economic, social and institutional factors, which have both historical and modern nature. Its formation is associated with long-term processes of state transformation, imperfection of the institutional environment and discrepancy between public expectations and real results of public authorities' activities.

One of the key reasons is the chronic problem of corruption, which undermines the legitimacy of state institutions and forms a persistent perception of their inefficiency and injustice. A high level of corruption risks, opacity of decision-making and selectivity in the application of legislation reduce the level of trust in government bodies and the legal system as a whole. In this context, corruption is not only an economic or legal phenomenon, but also a powerful destructive factor of institutional trust.

An equally important factor is the insufficient efficiency of public administration, which is manifested in the low quality of public services, excessive bureaucratization of procedures, weak coordination between government bodies and limited responsibility of officials for the results of their activities. Such dysfunctions form a negative experience of citizens' interaction with the state, which directly affects the level of trust.

Political instability and frequent changes in political elites, accompanied by inconsistency of state policy, incomplete reforms, and lack of long-term strategic development guidelines, also have a significant impact on the formation of a crisis of trust. As a result, the government is perceived as unstable and focused on short-term interests, which undermines its legitimacy.

A separate group of factors is socio-economic conditions, in particular, uneven development of regions, income levels of the population, access to quality public services and social infrastructure. Social inequality and a sense of unfair distribution of resources contribute to a decrease in trust in the state as a guarantor of social justice.

An important factor is also the information environment, which in the context of digitalization is characterized by a high level of fragmentation and the influence of disinformation. Insufficient quality of official communication, low level of



openness of the government, and the spread of unreliable information form a distorted perception of the activities of institutions and increase distrust.

It is also necessary to take into account the historical context, in particular the legacy of the Soviet administrative system, which was characterized by the dominance of centralized management, limited accountability of the authorities and the absence of traditions of trust between the state and citizens. These institutional patterns are partially preserved in modern conditions, influencing the behavioral attitudes of the population. In conditions of martial law, new challenges are added to the above factors, associated with the increased burden on state institutions, the need for prompt decision-making and the limitation of certain democratic procedures. Although war contributes to the consolidation of society around key institutions, it simultaneously exacerbates structural problems of governance, which may affect trust in the medium and long term.

Thus, the current state of institutional trust in Ukraine is characterized by a combination of a high level of trust in institutions that provide basic state functions and a persistent distrust of the political and administrative sector. Statistical data confirm the presence of a deep asymmetry in the perception of various institutions, which creates systemic challenges for the development of public administration mechanisms and necessitates their strategic transformation with an orientation towards increasing transparency, accountability and effectiveness of government activities. The identified asymmetry of institutional trust not only reflects the current state of interaction between society and government, but also directly affects the ability of public institutions to implement management functions in conditions of dynamic changes. That is why the analysis of structural imbalances of trust highlights the need to rethink the effectiveness of public administration mechanisms as a key tool for overcoming these challenges and ensuring the sustainability of the institutional system. Undoubtedly, the effectiveness of public administration mechanisms in the context of social transformations should be considered as a comprehensive characteristic that combines institutional capacity, the effectiveness of policy implementation, the level of citizen satisfaction with public services, and the system's ability to self-regulate and innovate. Under such conditions, effectiveness is determined not only by the achievement of planned results, but also by the flexibility of management mechanisms, their ability to adapt to changes in the external environment.

In this context, the conceptualization of the transformation of public administration mechanisms requires a systemic approach based on the integration of institutional, functional, and value components of the development of the management system. This is not only about the modernization of individual tools or procedures, but also about the formation of a new management paradigm, in which trust is a key system-forming factor that determines both the architecture of institutions and the logic of their functioning.



First of all, the conceptual principles of transformation should be based on the principle of institutional coherence, which involves the harmonization of formal and informal institutions. In the context of a crisis of trust, the need to bridge the gap between regulatory rules and the actual practice of their application becomes particularly important. This requires not only improving the legislative framework, but also the formation of an appropriate management culture focused on adhering to the principles of integrity, responsibility, and openness.

The second key guideline is the reorientation of public administration mechanisms to the model of human-centrism, which provides for the priority of citizens' interests in the process of forming and implementing state policy. This approach necessitates the transition from administrative and administrative logic to a service-oriented model, within which the quality of public services, their accessibility and convenience of receiving them are the determining criteria for the effectiveness of management.

At the same time, the transformation of public administration mechanisms should be based on the principle of network interaction, which involves the active involvement of various stakeholders in the processes of making management decisions. The development of partnership relations between the state, business and civil society will contribute to increasing the legitimacy of policies, expanding the resource base of management and forming joint responsibility for development results. Therefore, mechanisms of co-management, public consultations and participation that ensure the institutionalization of dialogue between authorities and society become important.

No less important is the implementation of the principle of adaptability of management mechanisms, which implies their ability to quickly respond to changes in the external environment. In conditions of high uncertainty and dynamism of social processes, effective public administration should be based on flexible institutional structures, scenario planning, the use of forecasting tools and risk management. This approach allows to increase the stability of the management system and minimize the negative consequences of crisis phenomena.

Special attention needs to be paid to improving institutional, organizational and legal mechanisms for ensuring trust as a systemic prerequisite for increasing the efficiency of public administration. Given the complex nature of the crisis of institutional trust, this process should be carried out on the basis of complementarity of reforms in various areas of public administration functioning.

The institutional dimension primarily involves increasing the capacity of public institutions to implement the functions assigned to them on the basis of transparency, accountability and integrity. The key task is to strengthen institutional autonomy and simultaneously strengthen the mechanisms of accountability of government bodies to society. It is necessary to improve the system of checks and balances, ensure the



real independence of the judiciary, and increase the effectiveness of anti-corruption institutions. Institutional stability and consistency of state policy are key factors in building long-term trust, as they ensure the predictability of management decisions and their compliance with public expectations.

The organizational aspect of the transformation of public administration mechanisms is associated with the modernization of internal processes of government functioning. This involves optimizing management structures, reducing excessive bureaucracy, introducing modern management methods, in particular a process approach, results-based management, and using strategic planning tools. Another important direction is the development of a public service quality management system, which involves standardizing procedures, introducing mechanisms for assessing citizen satisfaction, and forming effective feedback channels. A special role in this process is played by the professionalization of the civil service, which includes improving personnel skills, developing managerial competencies, and forming ethical standards of service. The legal dimension of ensuring trust is associated with the formation of a high-quality regulatory and legal environment that guarantees equality before the law, protection of citizens' rights and freedoms, and clarity of regulatory procedures. Improving legal mechanisms involves not only updating legislation, but also ensuring its effective implementation. Ensuring the rule of law as a basic principle of the functioning of the state, which forms the basis for trust in government institutions, is of particular importance. In this context, it is important to improve the quality of the law-making process, eliminate legal conflicts, reduce the regulatory burden and ensure the stability of the legal field.

It is important to emphasize that the effectiveness of institutional, organizational and legal mechanisms largely depends on the level of their integration and coherence. The fragmentation of reforms, the lack of coordination between different levels of government and institutions reduce their effectiveness and can deepen the crisis of trust. Therefore, it is necessary to form a holistic strategy for the development of public administration, which involves the synchronization of changes in all these areas.

In addition, an important element of ensuring trust is the development of public communication mechanisms, which should ensure the openness of government activities and citizens' access to information. Systematic, timely and reliable communication contributes to the formation of a positive perception of management decisions and increases the level of their legitimacy. In combination with the development of e-democracy tools, this creates the prerequisites for the formation of partnership relations between government and society.

When determining the directions of improving public administration mechanisms, it is necessary to pay attention to the international experience of



building institutional trust as a tool for increasing the efficiency of public administration and adapting its best practices to Ukrainian realities. Global practice shows that a high level of trust in public institutions is the result of the systematic implementation of the principles of openness, accountability, the rule of law and orientation to the needs of citizens, which are integrated into national management models taking into account their institutional specifics.

An analysis of the experience of countries with developed democratic institutions shows that the key factor in building trust is the stability and predictability of state policy, which is ensured by the consistency of reforms and high quality of strategic planning. In particular, in the countries of Northern Europe, considerable attention is paid to the development of inclusive mechanisms for citizen participation in decision-making processes, which contributes to increasing the level of legitimacy of management decisions and the formation of partnership relations between the state and society. In the countries of the European Union, the emphasis is on the institutionalization of the principles of good governance, which include transparency, accountability, efficiency and result orientation.

An important element of international experience is the implementation of open governance tools, in particular open data policies, which ensure citizens' access to information about the activities of government bodies and create the prerequisites for public control. For example, the practice of operating digital platforms in Estonia demonstrates that the integration of information and communication technologies into public administration processes contributes to increasing the transparency of procedures, reducing corruption risks and strengthening trust in state institutions.

The implementation of anti-corruption practices, which in international practice are considered a basic component of the formation of institutional trust, requires special attention. The experience of Singapore, Georgia and a number of EU countries shows that effective combating corruption is possible if strict legal mechanisms are combined with systemic organizational changes aimed at minimizing discretionary powers and increasing the transparency of management processes.

Development of the institutional capacity of public administration involves the implementation of modern approaches to personnel management, improving the professional level of civil servants and forming a culture of ethical behavior. Therefore, international experience shows the effectiveness of the application of performance evaluation systems, motivation mechanisms and continuous professional development of personnel.

Conclusions. In summary, it should be noted that the transformation of public administration mechanisms in the context of a crisis of institutional trust should be considered as a complex, multi-level process that involves simultaneous changes in the structure of institutions, the logic of management processes, and the value



orientations of the functioning of government. The implementation of these conceptual principles will contribute to the formation of an effective, open, and accountable public administration system capable of ensuring the restoration and sustainable growth of institutional trust in society.

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