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## **Activities of civil society institutions in the context of the concept of political participation: New challenges and additional features**

### SUMMARY

This paper is devoted to the peculiarities of the relationship between civil society institutions and public authorities under the current complicated circumstances.

It is noted that civil society is characterised by clear functional or 'activity' distinguishing features, representing the dynamic system of interaction between people in the process of aggregation and upholding of certain important issues. It is in this sense that the problem of participation and, in a more specific sense, political participation becomes especially relevant. Such participation is the substantive basis of the concept of participatory democracy, which refers to the ability of citizens not only to participate in elections, referendums and plebiscites, but also directly in the political process – in the preparation, adoption and implementation of government decisions.

Today, the complex problematics of civil society institutions in the context of the concept of political participation is gaining additional relevance. This is primarily due to two important factors: firstly, the in-depth understanding of the essence of representative democracy with the emphasis on the involvement of citizens in participation in the government; secondly, the significant opportunities of the use of Internet resources. Moreover, in this case, the principle is that participatory democracy does not replace, but complements representative democracy in its classical sense (mechanisms and principles of these two forms do not coincide, so they may not replace but complement each other).

In our opinion, purely practical importance in the implementation of the concept of participatory democracy should be given to managerial, administrative and actually participatory models. Moreover, in practice, these models cannot be implemented in their pure forms and are embodied in a kind of hybrid form with a combination, depending on the current situation and different components of the outlined models. In this case, we should talk about updating the entire system of power, abandoning some traditional forms of work and mastering new mechanisms in the implementation of the idea that "the state is the civil society"!

**Key words:** democracy, participatory democracy, public sphere, institutions, civil society institutions.

## **Introduction**

### **Formulation of the issue**

Civil society is an active substance, which is a dynamic system of interaction of people connected by some common interests and values. At the same time, the position that fundamental human rights can be recognized and fully protected only in the democratically organized society is important and unconditionally proven for us. The leading features of such a society include not only the dominance of the will of the majority of the population, but also protection, inviolability of fundamental rights of all persons, including those who make up a smaller part of it (and in this case should be important to those citizens who are united in various associations and groups). It has already become generally accepted that an important condition for the existence of civil society is the opportunity provided by the state authorities for economically and politically free individuals to participate in various forms of self-organization and self-expression. Therefore, it should be about the possibility of proper institutionalization of civil society, as well as various forms of public participation in defending their own and even public interests.

In general, the institutionalization of civil society is understood as a process by which public associations are formed and relevant procedures acquire values and sustainability (development of quantitative and qualitative features in the formation of institutions, socio-political mobilization and civic participation in their specific functions, in particular, dissemination of democratic values and norms, etc.). As a result, social actions become orderly and clearly organized. It is in this sense that the problem of participation and, in a more specific sense, political participation becomes especially relevant.

Therefore, the relevance of the study of the selected issues is primarily explained by two important circumstances. Firstly, it is the rapid growth of the importance of civil society institutions in the exercise of state power and in general in the process of functioning of the political system of society. Secondly, there are visible shortcomings in the implementation of traditional principles of political representation and in the functioning of modern parliamentarism.

### **Analysis of recent research and publications**

The complex issues of public associations in the context of the concept of political participation is marked by the pronounced interdisciplinary nature. Its individual aspects are studied by representatives of the scientific fields of political science, sociology, law and public administration. Naturally, they base their own research on the work of well-known Western scholars, including the concepts of strong democracy by B. Barber, the theory of polyarchy by R. Dahl, consolidated democracy by L. Diamond, democratic transit by J. Linz and A. Stepan, deliberative democracy by J. Habermas, E. Gutman, E. Fishkin, and others, D. Held's model of democracy, the participatory democracy by J. Masuda, K. Pateman, L. le Duc, J. F. Zimmerman and others, S. Huntington's theory of civilization, D. Zolo's postclassical democracy, D. Liophart's consensual theory of democracy, K. Hesse's democratic order or system, the "creative" democracy by J. Dewey and some others. The research conducted by the above and some other authors is based on the strong empirical basis and contains the analysis of the wide range of different ways of participation

(or non-participation) of the subject in politics (both at the individual level and through social institutions).

Thus, the papers of B. Barber on the need to involve all interested parties and even the general population in politics, the importance of political knowledge and effective public opinion, and, ultimately, the development of such a form of political consciousness, became exemplary for continuing research in this direction, which will provide opportunities for “turning individuals into responsible citizens”<sup>1</sup>. According to K. Hesse, democracy should not be seen as an abstract doctrine, but as a concrete structure of historical reality; democracy cannot proceed from the unanimous will of the people as a prerequisite for self-government and proceeds only from the real basis: the delimitation and opposition of opinions, interests, expressions of will and demands and the existence of conflicts within the people<sup>2</sup>. According to J. Fishkin, democracy will be maximized only if citizens realize themselves not by the conditions of democracy, but by those who decide their own affairs in the democratic environment<sup>3</sup>. Related to these should be the provisions of J. Dewey’s work entitled *Democracy and Education*, expressed several decades ago, but which still seem to be extremely relevant today, two main elements are important for democracy that need constant attention: schools and civil society, full democracy is established not only by universal suffrage, but also through established public opinion, which can be achieved through the effective system of communication between citizens, professionals and politicians, and the latter are responsible for the policies they implement in life, literally: “with the results of their work a person is responsible not only to the particular employer, but also to the ultimate employer – the community [...] if you, gaining experience, did not find yourself in service to others, you did not go by vocation”<sup>4</sup>.

Naturally, the above-mentioned surnames do not limit the contribution of scholars to the development of the concept of participatory democracy. In addition, the boundaries between the concepts outlined above are somewhat conditional and quite flexible. Indeed, at the heart of all these concepts is the active participation of individuals and individual groups in the development of various political and government issues. The corresponding part of this manuscript was composed according to this criterion.

As a basic basis for this study should be cited the repeatedly quoted phrase of J. Alexander that the components (elements) of civil society should be considered not as “autonomous” and independent of other components of society, but as such that interact with other spheres of society (including the state), influencing them and falling under their influence<sup>5</sup>.

**The purpose of the article**, taking into account the work of these authors, the peculiarities of the relationship between civil society institutions and public authorities in the current difficult conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> B. Barber, *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics For a New Age*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003, 320 p., p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> К. Хессе, *Основы конституционного права ФРГ*, Москва: Прогресс, 1981, 368 с., с. 72.

<sup>3</sup> J. Fishkin, *When the People Speak, Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation*, Oxford: University Press, 2009, 183 p., p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Дж. Д’юї, *Демократія і освіта*, Львів: Літопис, 2003. 294 с. p. 253.

<sup>5</sup> J. C. Alexander, *Introduction. Real Civil Liberties*, London: Sage, 1998, 298 p, p. 1–19. p. 7.

### Presenting main material

“Participation” in the general sense is an instrumental activity through which citizens try to influence the activities of public authorities in such a way that they do what they want. In a more practical sense, the categories “political participation” and “participatory democracy” are used.

The beginning of systemic shifts in the study of the concept of “political participation” dates back to the 1970s and due to the emergence of new developments in the analysis of political systems of contemporary societies (first of all, the spread among American researchers of behaviourism and political psychology).

The first major step in this regard was taken by S. Verba in his article “Democratic Participation”, which noted: “Broadly speaking, democratic participation is the process by which citizens influence or control those who make important decisions affecting their interests”<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, the most universal definition of this concept was given, in our opinion, formulated by his compatriot J. N. Nagel: political participation is an activity through which the so-called “ordinary” (or better in the context of this phrase – “ordinary” – V.D.) citizens influence or try to influence the performance of governments<sup>7</sup>. In the more specific interpretation, it is the involvement of members of the certain socio-political community in the process of political-power relations; the influence of the public on the course of existing socio-political processes in society and on the formation of power political structures. However, it is obvious that the basic purpose of such participation should be considered to satisfy some requests or interests of certain subjects of such participation.

According to the above and some other definitions, political participation should be understood as the actions of people or groups used to express their own interests and influence the content of decisions at various levels of government. At the heart of this theory is the belief in the ability of citizens not only to participate in elections, referendums and plebiscites, but also directly in the political process – in the preparation, adoption and implementation of government decisions. In this sense, it is important to note that only through the implementation of practical actions does the subject cross the threshold of speculative feelings and interest in politics. In view of the above, the importance of political participation should primarily include specific actions or deeds of the person who has overcome the level of passive participation in political affairs (only by means of one-time participation in elections or referendums). Therefore, political participation should be considered in terms of the practical or empirical level of involvement of individuals in political life through specific actions.

“Such participation should be considered in terms of the functioning of the public sphere, which is one of the key characteristics of the essence of modern government and the development of modern political systems. Indeed, the features of the democratic political regime should include, inter alia, the effective public sphere in which a worthy place is given to open political discussion and full cooperation of all participants in the political process. Under such conditions, the state must ensure the formation of the information agenda of public relations,

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<sup>6</sup> S. Verba, *Democratic Participation*, „Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science” 1967, Vol. 73, No. 1, p. 53–78, p. 54.

<sup>7</sup> J. N. Nagel, *Participation*, N.Y., 1976, 173 p., pp. 1–2

promptly identifying and disclosing issues that are the focus of public debate and are sensitive to society. In this regard, there is the growing need to actively involve a wide range of public structures, representatives of the expert-analytical community, etc. in such discussions. All this, ultimately, should ensure the necessary level of public involvement and involvement in the political process, as well as its control over the decision-making process.

In this case, we consider it appropriate to once again turn to the theoretical legacy of J. Habermas, who in the mid-1960s in his book “Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: A Study of the Category of Bourgeois Society” defined the public sphere as “sphere of social life, where on the basis of rational arguments important issues for society are discussed, and public opinion is formed”<sup>8</sup>.

The main forms of political participation include: participation in referendums, voting, lobbying, participation in political campaigns, personal contacts with politicians, participation in local political life (both in the activities of local governments and local communities), participation in activities of public organizations and various civic initiatives, participation in protests (conflict participation), etc. The participation of political parties and trade unions also deserves special attention (it should be noted that such participation is not the subject of this study; we primarily proceeded from the main argument that the role of civil society in politics is not related to coming to power or with its strict control, and with the influence or pressure on the government, led by diverse associations and free discussion with the participation of all stakeholders).

Naturally, the participation of ordinary citizens in political life in various forms correlates with the idea of democracy and generally depends on success in democratization. In this sense, it should be noted that the factor of full public participation of civil society institutions in government is increasingly included in the integral characteristics of the modern understanding of democracy and the democratic process. In fact, for modern democracy, it is not the formal proclamation of the rights and freedoms of citizens that is fundamentally important, but the provision of citizens with the full benefits of such achievements of the democratic process.

Tus, in the second half of the twentieth century, J. Linz, whose work has already been discussed in this paper, combining different approaches to the definition of democracy, concluded that democracy is a legitimate right to “formulate and defend political alternatives accompanying the right to freedom of association, freedom of speech and other fundamental political rights of the individual; free and non-violent competition of leaders of society with periodic evaluation of their claims to the management of society; inclusion in the democratic process of all effective political institutions [...]”<sup>9</sup>.

Later, J. Linz and A. Stepan, among the factors due to which consolidated democracy receives support and is embodied in the political systems of individual countries, put the maturity of civil society institutions at the forefront (more specifically definition, the level of interaction between the state and independent public groups and associations)<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> J. Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1990, 301 s., s. 175–177

<sup>9</sup> J.J. Linz, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, Vol. 1. Crisis, Breakdown, & Reequilibration, Baltimore, L.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, 130 p., pp. 5–6.

<sup>10</sup> J.J. Linz and A. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation. Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, 479 p., p. 5.

In the recent publication, D. Campbell offers the following working definition of democracy, which is taken as a starting point for further consideration: "Democracy is a system of multi-layered public self-government based on basic human rights, with freedom and equality principles. Democracy is understood as a consistently self-organizing system. Thus, any theory of democracy is a theory of system (or systems) of public self-government based on human rights"<sup>11</sup>.

Today, the perception of the essence of political participation is rapidly changing. Deficiencies in the traditional view of the functioning of representative democracy are also becoming more frequent. The first thing that has already been pointed out in this study is the growing negative attitude towards limiting the role of citizens in public administration only by means of participation in parliamentary elections, as well as the growing distrust of parliamentarism in the traditional interpretation of this concept – only as a national representative body and the legislature). In addition, the complicated decision-making procedure inherent in modern popular representation often only adds negative touches to citizens' perceptions of their elected parliaments (quite often, as noted in the publication called "Fundamentals of Democracy", the consistent observance of democratic procedures for citizens looks like a travesty of common sense, long-term discussions – "talkfest" delaying the solution of urgent problems<sup>12</sup>. To all this, some relatively new aspects of understanding participation should be added, based on the concept of negative freedom and the basic value for the individual of not political, but purely personal rights (first of all, freedom from interference in private or personal life).

Moreover, these trends are typical of countries with a strong tradition of democratic governance. So, at the beginning of the twenty first century, S. Macedo, in the introductory article to the collective monograph *Democracy in Danger: How Political Elections Undermine Citizen Participation and What We Can Do About It*, noted: "Citizens participate in public affairs less frequently, with less knowledge and enthusiasm, in fewer places and less evenly than is necessary for the health of the dynamic democratic state"<sup>13</sup>. On the other hand, modern researchers are almost unanimous in noting the fact that political parties, even in Western countries, have partially lost the ability to adequately reflect the hopes and aspirations of ordinary citizens.

Under such conditions, the idea of full participation of citizens in government and social development becomes more relevant. Indeed, the intensive development of modern information and communication technologies, the formation and widespread use of new forms and technologies of political communication create the new environment for interaction between government and society. Some researchers, such as S. Coleman and D. Norris, even develop the idea of e-democracy as a hybrid solution to the old theoretical debate between representative and direct democracy, pointing out: "If the problem with direct democracy is populism, and the frustration of representative democracy is the disunity between political representatives and voters, then the notion of direct representation as a politically attractive and constitutionally responsible synthesis of both may prove to be a way to revive the legitimacy of democracy in the era of interactive services and relationships"<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> D.F.J. Campbell, *Global quality of democracy as innovation enabler: measuring democracy for success*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, 509 p., p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> *Основи демократії: підруч. для студ. вищих навч. закладів* / за заг. ред. А. Ф. Колодій; 3-тє вид., онов. і доп. Львів: Астролябія, 2009, 832 с., с. 38.

<sup>13</sup> S. Macedo, *Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation, and What We Can Do About It*, Washington 2005, DC: Brookings Institution Press. 240 p., p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> S. Coleman, D. Norris, *A New Agenda for E-Democracy*, Oxford Internet Institute, „Forum

At the same time, additional attention should be paid to the threats that accompany the use of Internet resources and the intensive development of modern information technologies. In particular, the views of D. Zolo seem to be relevant, which were clearly and systematically expressed in the late 1990s, but today in the context of intensive development of the information society are gaining additional relevance: the gradual displacement of parliamentary democracy “telecracy”, the formation of political preferences of the majority of citizens under the influence of information pressure (in particular, due to irrational methods and means of influencing the subconscious, which threatens to suppress or even suppress critical perception of reality), etc.<sup>15</sup>

However, it is natural that along with new challenges, new opportunities appear. Thus, the transformation of government institutions on this basis is multifaceted. On the one hand, there are tendencies to improve the institutions of power, the government gets opportunities for more effective interaction with society, the introduction of new elements of forms of direct democracy on the Internet, redistribution of some powers in favour of society and more. On the other hand, there is an urgent need to renew the entire system of government, abandon some traditional forms of work and master new mechanisms of influence on society.

With the possibility of using information and communication technologies, civil society institutions also received the additional and extremely powerful communication resource. Researchers have repeatedly noted the importance of communications and the use of communicative resources in the study of modern government and administrative relations. It is also a matter of the renewed understanding of the nature of the relationship between public authorities and civil society institutions. In this case, special attention should be paid to the fact that communication on the Internet is based on horizontal connections and in interactive form as “one to many” and at the same time “many to one”. It is no coincidence that M. Castells characterizes Internet communication as mass “self-communication”, and modern society as a network, in which there are many communication channels that carry information flows<sup>16</sup>.

At present, various approaches to the use of Internet opportunities by the state in the field of public relations (or influence on the public) are being intensively developed. For example, we took the approach developed by A. Chadwick and C. May, highlighting the so-called managerial, administrative and participatory models.

Thus, the use of the Internet management model in politics is limited to direct and partly directive influence on citizens (top-down connections; the government uses the World Wide Web as a mechanism to facilitate bureaucratic procedures and ensure a more efficient process of transmitting information from government to citizens).

The administrative model, which in some respects is similar to the previous model (it is the state that organizes the transmission of information to society), at the same time provides for greater participation of citizens in the political process (but such participation must also be authorized by the state).

According to the principles of the participatory model, it is assumed that the public is widely involved in social and political activities, which also marks a greater degree

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Discussion Paper” 2005, No. 4, January, p. 1–36, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.139.5649&rep=rep1&type=pdf>. 31.

<sup>15</sup> D. Zolo, *Democracy and Complexity: A Realist Approach*, Oxford. Polity Press Ltd., 1992, 202 p.

<sup>16</sup> M. Castells, *Communication Power*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 574 p., p. 102.

of equality in relations between the state and society (it is the use of this model that ensures a full-fledged dialogue between the authorities and citizens, since it provides all interested persons with the opportunity to come up with political initiatives, participate in discussions directly related to the adoption of certain bills or administrative decisions, etc.)<sup>17</sup>.

In our opinion, the above models, with which we generally agree, should be given somewhat different characteristics (see in this regard the content of our table entitled “Models of use of Internet resources by the state in the field of public relations”; see: Table 1).

Table 1. Models of use of Internet resources by states in the field of public relations (author’s approach)

Models	Contents of models (author’s definition)
Management	The model according to which the use of the Internet resource is based on subject–object relations in the broad sense, according to which managerial influences are complemented by the presence of feedback mechanisms (with the active role of citizens in discussing government and purely administrative decisions)
Administrative	The model of Internet use, which is based on subject-object relations in the traditional sense, which is partly limited to administrative and executive activities and the use of electronic resources to familiarize the public with the approved documents
Participatory	The model based on horizontal connections and full interaction of all interested parties, which is provided with opportunities for full use of the Internet resource

The content of the above table should indicate that these models are to some extent used even in conditions of democratic governance and civilized social relations. The significance of such models is primarily in the peculiarities of the use of Internet resources depending on the tasks facing public authorities in public relations. In addition, they can be used as one of the basic guidelines for determining the measure of democratization of state-power relations (after all, for example, basing only on administrative or, with some degree of conventionality, managerial models while simultaneously neglecting participatory should indicate shortcomings in state-power and managerial relationship).

In developing these models, we primarily proceeded from the fact that none of them exists in the so-called „pure form”: any successful democracy, and with it the model of electronic resource use in practice is embodied through a kind of hybrid form, combining different components of the outlined models.

<sup>17</sup> A. Chadwick, C. May, *Interaction between States and Citizens in the Age of Internet: «e-Government» in the United States, Britain and the European Union*, „Governance” 2003, Vol. 16, No 2, p. 271–300.



## Conclusions

Civil society is not only a certain level of the structure of society, but also the active substance, which is the dynamic system of interaction of people connected by some common interests and values. In this case, civil society institutions aimed at aggregation and bringing specific issues to power should be of paramount importance. It is in this sense that the problem of participation and, in a more specific sense, political participation becomes especially relevant. Such participation is the substantive basis of the concept of participatory democracy, which provides the ability of citizens not only to participate in elections, referendums and plebiscites, but also directly in the political process – in the preparation, adoption and implementation of government decisions.

The idea of participatory democracy became widespread in the second half of the twentieth century – early twenty first century, primarily due to several important factors, namely: the crisis of the institution of elections and representative democracy in the traditional sense, the latter's inability to act properly needs of different social groups, etc. Moreover, the principle in this case is that participatory democracy does not replace, but complements representative democracy in its classical sense (mechanisms and principles of these two forms do not coincide, so they may not replace but complement each other).

Today, the complex problematics of civil society institutions in the context of the concept of political participation is gaining additional relevance. This is primarily due to two important factors: *firstly*, the in-depth understanding of the essence of representative democracy with the emphasis on the involvement of citizens in participation in government; *secondly*, with significant opportunities in the use of Internet resources.

The dependence of the participation of civil society institutions on the democratization of the political regime is also clear. Moreover, in our opinion, in this case, purely practical importance should be given to management, administrative and actually participatory models. It should also be noted that any successful democracy, and with it the model of using electronic resources in practice is embodied through a kind of hybrid form, combining different components of the outlined models. In this case, we should talk about updating the entire system of power, abandoning some traditional forms of work and mastering new mechanisms in the implementation of the relationship “state is the civil society”!

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## РЕЗЮМЕ

Віталій Древаль (Vitaly Dreval)

**Діяльність інституцій громадянського суспільства у контексті концепції політичної участі: нові виклики та додаткові можливості**

Статтю присвячено особливостям взаємозв'язків інституцій громадянського суспільства та органів державної влади у складних умовах сьогодення. Відзначено, що громадянське суспільство відзначається чіткими функціональними чи «діяльнісними» характеристиками, являючи собою динамічну систему взаємодії людей у процесі агрегації та відстоювання певних важливих питань. Якраз у цьому сенсі і набуває особливої актуальності проблема участі та в більш конкретному розумінні, політичної участі. Така участь складає змістовну основу концепту демократії участі, який передбачає здатність громадян не лише брати участь у виборах, референдумах та плебісцитах, але і безпосередньо у політичному процесі – у підготовці, прийнятті та впровадженні владних рішень. На сьогодні ж комплексна проблематика діяльності інституцій громадянського суспільства у контексті концепції політичної участі набуває додаткової актуальності. Це насамперед пов'язується з двома важливими обставинами: по-перше, з поглибленим розумінням сутності представницької демократії з акцентуванням уваги на причетності громадян до участі у державному владарюванні; по-друге, зі значними можливостями у справі використання інтернет-ресурсу. Причому, принциповим у даному разі є те, що демократія участі не заміняє, а доповнює представницьку демократію в її класичному розумінні (механізми та принципи дії цих двох форм не збігаються, відтак вони можуть не заміняти, а доповнювати одна іншу). За нашою оцінкою, суто практичне значення у реалізації концепції демократії участі має відводитися управлінській, адміністративній та власне учасницькій моделям. Причому, на практиці ці моделі не можуть бути реалізовані у чистому вигляді і втілюються у своєрідній гібридній формі з поєднанням залежно від поточної ситуації різні компоненти окреслених моделей. У даному разі взагалі має йтися про оновлення усієї системи владарювання, відмови від деяких традиційних форм роботи та опанування нових механізмів у реалізації взаємозв'язку «держава – громадянське суспільство»!

**Ключові слова:** демократія, демократія участі, публічна сфера, інститути, інститути громадянського суспільства.

## STRESZCZENIE

Vitaly Dreval (Віталій Древал)

**Działania instytucji społeczeństwa obywatelskiego w kontekście koncepcji partycypacji politycznej: Nowe wyzwania i dodatkowe cechy**

Artykuł poświęcony jest specyfice relacji między instytucjami społeczeństwa obywatelskiego a władzami publicznymi w obecnych trudnych warunkach.

Zauważa się, że społeczeństwo obywatelskie wyróżnia się wyraźnymi cechami funkcjonalnymi lub „aktywnościowymi”, reprezentującymi dynamiczny system interakcji między ludźmi w procesie agregacji i podtrzymującym pewne ważne kwestie. Właśnie w tym sensie problem partycypacji, a bardziej konkretnie partycypacji politycznej, staje się szczególnie istotny. Takie uczestnictwo jest materialną podstawą koncepcji demokracji uczestniczącej, która zapewnia obywatelom możliwość nie tylko udziału w wyborach, referendach i plebiscytach, ale także bezpośrednio w procesie politycznym – w przygotowywaniu, przyjmowaniu i wdrażaniu decyzji rządowych.

Dzisiaj złożona problematyka instytucji społeczeństwa obywatelskiego w kontekście koncepcji partycypacji politycznej nabiera dodatkowego znaczenia. Wynika to przede wszystkim z dwóch ważnych czynników: po pierwsze, dogłębnego zrozumienia istoty demokracji przedstawicielskiej z naciskiem na zaangażowanie obywateli w udział w rządzie; po drugie, ze znacznymi możliwościami wykorzystania zasobów Internetu. Co więcej, zasadą jest w tym przypadku, że demokracja uczestnicząca nie zastępuje, ale uzupełnia demokrację przedstawicielską w jej klasycznym sensie (mechanizmy i zasady tych dwóch form nie pokrywają się, więc mogą nie zastępować, lecz uzupełniać się). Naszym zdaniem czysto praktyczne znaczenie we wdrażaniu koncepcji demokracji uczestniczącej należy nadać modelom menedżerskim, administracyjnym i faktycznie partycypacyjnym. Co więcej, w praktyce modele te nie mogą być zaimplementowane w czystej postaci i są ucieleśniane w swoistej formie hybrydowej z kombinacją, w zależności od aktualnej sytuacji i różnych składowych zarysowanych modeli. W tym przypadku powinniśmy mówić o aktualizacji całego systemu władzy, porzuceniu niektórych tradycyjnych form pracy i opanowaniu nowych mechanizmów realizacji relacji „państwo to społeczeństwo obywatelskie!”.

**Słowa kluczowe:** demokracja, demokracja uczestnicząca, sfera publiczna, instytucje, instytucje społeczeństwa obywatelskiego.

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