

DOI: 10.46340/eppd.2020.7.3.19

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## **ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR INTERACTION OF VERKHOVNA RADA OF UKRAINE WITH LOCAL COUNCILS**

The article analyzes the specific features of organizational interaction of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (the Supreme Council) with local councils (village, settlement, city) and local self-government bodies representing the common interests of the communities of villages, settlements and cities (district and regional councils) as the main subjects of forming and developing representative democracy in Ukraine.

It was determined that the main indicator of the public sphere is the capacity of public authorities, interacting within the representative governance system, for collective action which is based on the articulation of common interests through a continuous rational discussion. The structure of public interest with the relevant organizational structures that represent the territorial and social interests of society is developed. The powers of the parliament, local councils, and representative organizations are delimited, and basic principles are formulated.

A scheme was developed to show the interaction between representative authorities and such organizations as the Coordination Council on Local Self-Government under the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on State Building, Local Governance, Regional and Urban Development, the All-Ukrainian Association of Communities, the All-Ukrainian Association of Local Self-Governments, the Association of Ukrainian Cities, the All-Ukrainian Association of Village and Settlement Councils, the Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities of Ukraine.

**Keywords:** system of representative governance, interaction of representative bodies, parliament, local council, organizational interaction, public interest, representation of interests.

An effective interaction within the public sphere is a defining organizational principle of public administration and a valuable indicator of the degree of its democracy. The basis of any interaction, and an important element of it, is a goal, in the absence of which the interaction itself becomes impossible. Accordingly, the parliament and local councils are the bodies that collectively form a system of representative governance aimed to secure the rule of the people and support representative democracy.

Representative democracy, in turn, is based on a process of continuous rational representation of citizens' interests at all levels of government, which can be achieved by way of organizing the interaction of all actors through political dialogue and public-administrative discourse.

There are two dimensions of interaction in the public administration system: interaction between public authorities; interaction of public authorities with society.

Describing the interaction between public authorities and local self-government bodies, we must note that it can be of different nature and different types: political, which determines the existence of procedures of coordinated public policy; lawmaking, which characterizes the harmonization of legislation and regulatory acts; organizational i.e. coordination of actions on implementing public policy and public administration; resource-related, which provides allocation of resources adequate to public policy and public-administrative functions; representative, which presupposes that the parliament and local self-government bodies represent the interests of the entire people and those of local communities before the executive authorities<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Клименко, І.В. (2018). Взаємодія в публічному управлінні. *Публічне управління: термінологічний словник*. Київ: НАДУ, 22.

In the context of public administration development, the improvement of various forms and methods of interaction between public authorities and local governments is of particular relevance. First of all, it concerns the parliament and local councils which are entrusted with the function of securing the rule of the people as a special form of democracy in Ukraine and its regions.

The interaction between the branches of government, between different levels of public authority, and their interaction with the public, specifically the organizational aspects, have been the subject of research of a large number of domestic and foreign scientists, in particular: T. Bezverkhniuk<sup>1</sup>, V. Goshovska<sup>2</sup>, I. Klimenko<sup>3</sup>, H. Panchenko<sup>4</sup>, A. Troian<sup>5</sup>, P. Vorona<sup>6</sup>, J. Habermas<sup>7</sup>, J. Weintraub<sup>8</sup> and other researchers who have laid a substantial theoretical foundation for a detailed study of the need for and peculiarities of ensuring interaction between representative bodies and organizations aiming to ensure the representative democracy in Ukraine.

However, there has not been any specific study of the interaction within the system of representative bodies based on the reconciliation of territorial interests of different local governments and the parliament, which could help form public interest.

The **objective** of the present article is to investigate the organizational foundations of the interaction of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine with local councils, which collectively constitute the system of representative governance, in order to ensure the general representation of the interests of society at all levels of public administration and to support the country's representative democracy.

Describing the interaction of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (VRU) with local councils, we should note that scientists regard them as bodies of representative power, that is, collective standing or part-time elected bodies of state power and local government, empowered to represent territorial interests of society – the interests of people who elected them<sup>9</sup>.

These institutions of government lay the foundation of the system of representative governance, expressing democracy, and are a form of embodiment and exercise of national sovereignty<sup>10</sup>. P. Vorona, when developing the organizational structure of representative power in Ukraine, identified two levels of representative bodies: the central (VRU), and the local which, in turn, are divided into regional (district, regional), and local proper (municipal) – city, village, settlement, urban district, and citizens' self-organization bodies<sup>11</sup>. Such a complex hierarchical system of representative bodies requires a strong scientific substantiation for the organization of their interaction and representation of the interests of citizens at different levels of the administrative and territorial structure of the state.

Turning to the definition of the system, we should stress that it is a complex entity, formed by many, as a rule, diverse factors that work for a common plan or serve to achieve a common goal<sup>12</sup>. That is to say,

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<sup>1</sup> Безверхнюк, Т.М., Котова, Н.О., Попов, С.А. (2011). *Управління проектами в публічній сфері*: навчальний посібник. Одеса: ОРІДУ НАДУ, 295.

<sup>2</sup> Гошовська, В.А. та ін. (2018). *Парламентаризм*: підручник. 2-ге вид., допов. й розшир. Київ: НАДУ.

<sup>3</sup> Клименко, І.В. (2018). Взаємодія в публічному управлінні. *Публічне управління: термінологічний словник*. Київ: НАДУ, 224.

<sup>4</sup> Клименко, І.В. (2018). Взаємодія в публічному управлінні. *Публічне управління: термінологічний словник*. Київ: НАДУ, 224.

<sup>5</sup> Троян, А.В. (2010). Взаємовідносини Верховної Ради України та органів місцевого самоврядування в контексті правових позицій Конституційного суду України. *Науковий вісник Академії муніципального управління, серія "Право, 1*. doi: <[http://www.nbu.gov.ua/portal/Soc\\_Gum/Nvamu\\_pr/2010\\_1/11.pdf](http://www.nbu.gov.ua/portal/Soc_Gum/Nvamu_pr/2010_1/11.pdf)>.

<sup>6</sup> Ворона, П.В. (2001). Особливості становлення та розвитку представницької влади в Україні (на прикладі місцевого самоврядування). *Теорія та практика державного управління, 4* (35). doi: <<http://dspace.puet.edu.ua/bitstream/123456789/1668/1/01.pdf>>.

<sup>7</sup> Хабермас, Ю. (2006). *Залучення інозого: студії з політичної теорії*. Львів: Астролябія, 416.

<sup>8</sup> Wientraub, J., Kumar, K. (1997). *Public and Private in Thought and Practice. Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 399.

<sup>9</sup> Гошовська, В.А. (ред.) (2013). *Взаємодія Верховної Ради України із суб'єктами державного управління: історія та сучасний стан: наукова розробка*. Київ: НАДУ, 48.

<sup>10</sup> Шемшученко, Ю.С., Бабакін, В.Д. (ред.) (2004). *Політологічний енциклопедичний словник*. 2-е вид.: доп. і перероб. Київ: Генеза.

<sup>11</sup> Ворона, П.В. (2001). Особливості становлення та розвитку представницької влади в Україні (на прикладі місцевого самоврядування). *Теорія та практика державного управління, 4* (35). doi: <<http://dspace.puet.edu.ua/bitstream/123456789/1668/1/01.pdf>>.

<sup>12</sup> Садовский, В.Н. (1974). *Основания общей теории систем*. Москва: Наука, 97.

the system is an assembly or a combination of objects connected by a regular interaction or interchangeability; this 'assembly or combination' of objects creates a certain relationship called 'a regular interaction or interchangeability'<sup>1</sup>. This relationship has certain properties that differentiate it from other relationships.

Another distinguishing feature that characterizes the system as orderly acting integrity, a totality, is that it is the orderly integrity which specifies and enriches the fixed properties with additional features, while the structure remains the same<sup>2</sup>. Considering that the main purpose of the representative bodies is to ensure the functioning of representative democracy, that is, a rational representation of the interests of citizens at all levels of government, we can state that the overall purpose of the representative governance system is actually to ensure the sovereignty of the people as the representative democracy basis. Therefore, an important task is to establish inter-system communication, namely between the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and local councils.

It should be pointed out that within the framework of exercising the representative function of the VRU, which provides for the expression of the people's will and is the basis of state power, there is a requirement of continuous communication and interaction with both territorial representative bodies (local councils) and citizens. The peculiarity of the representative function of the VRU is that all the legal and regulatory acts, approved by it, must express social and public interest<sup>3</sup>. This means that the citizens of Ukraine, on the basis of universal, equal, direct suffrage, delegate representation of their interests at the national, subregional and local administrative levels. That is why we deem it necessary to consider the nature and differences between social, public and state interests.

Social interest expresses common interests that can be regarded as generalized personal and group interests, without satisfaction of which it is impossible, on the one hand, to satisfy the private interests of individuals, and on the other hand, to ensure the integrity, stability and normal development of society as a whole<sup>4</sup>. However, not all public interests acquire the characteristics of publicity and become a kind of public interest governed by public law, but only those recognized by the state or by local governments. The social interests that have not acquired public character (are not reflected in the laws or other legal acts where the state undertakes to determine the sources and rules of financing specific needs) should be satisfied at the expense of the members of the respective public associations.

Public interest is a more complex concept and is defined as the interest of a social community, recognized by the state and secured by law, the satisfaction of which is a prerequisite and guarantee of its existence and development; the vital condition of large social groups, including society as a whole, the responsibility for which rests with the state; the interest of society, reflected and properly enshrined in the law, the implementation, security and protection of which is entrusted to the state<sup>5</sup>. Accordingly, the special features of public interest are: its legitimization; determining the method of legal regulation of social relations; constant variability subject to specific historical, socio-cultural, geopolitical, and economic conditions. The structure and place of public interest can be presented schematically in the general hierarchy of public interests (see Fig. 1).

Thus, as shown in Figure 1, national, regional, subregional and local interests are the levels of territorial interest that are formed on the basis of the interests of citizens who make up the territorial community of the relevant level, and the economic entities operating by using the resources of the respective territory. The level of localization of interests depends on the distribution of the governance functions and powers between subregional and local bodies of power which express the interests of their territorial communities.

The territorial interests, according to Art. 140 of the Constitution of Ukraine<sup>6</sup>, are held by local government bodies which, in turn, are entrusted by the territorial community to independently resolve issues of local importance – a right that is clearly defined in the relevant regulatory acts.

<sup>1</sup> Уёмов, А.И. (1978). *Системный подход и общая теория систем*. Москва: Мысль, 102.

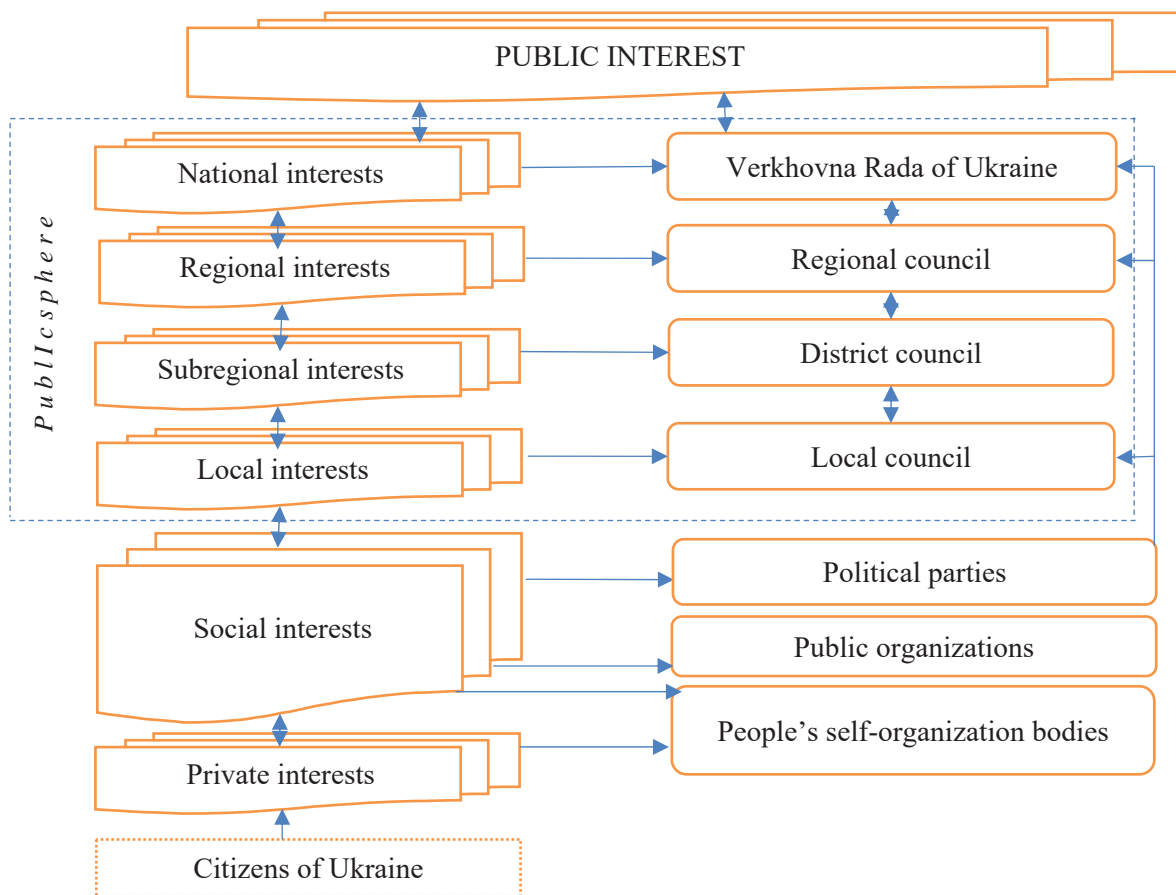
<sup>2</sup> Сурмин, Ю.П. (2003). *Теория систем и системный анализ*: учебное пособие. Киев: МАУП, 38.

<sup>3</sup> Гошовська, В.А. та ін. (2019). *Парламентаризм: підручник*. 2-ге вид., допов. й розшир. Київ: НАДУ, 571.

<sup>4</sup> Безверхнюк, Т.М., Котова, Н.О., Попов, С.А. (2011). *Управління проектами в публічній сфері*: навчальний посібник. Одеса: ОРІДУ НАДУ, 31.

<sup>5</sup> Безверхнюк, Т.М., Котова, Н.О., Попов, С.А. (2011). *Управління проектами в публічній сфері*: навчальний посібник. Одеса: ОРІДУ НАДУ, 29.

<sup>6</sup> Конституція України 1996 (Верховна Рада України). *Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України*. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80>> (2019, September, 03).



**Fig. 1. The structure of public interest and representative bodies / organizations**

Source: the author's elaboration.

The legal and organizational principles of realization of rights and freedoms and fulfillment of social, political, economic and other interests of citizens are defined by a series of laws of Ukraine, and namely: “On Bodies of Self-organization of the Population”<sup>1</sup>, “On Public Associations”<sup>2</sup>, “On Political Parties”<sup>3</sup>. The legal framework for the formation, powers, principles of organization and functioning, legal status and responsibilities of local councils is specified in the Law of Ukraine “On Local Self-Government in Ukraine”<sup>4</sup>, Section XI of the Constitution of Ukraine<sup>5</sup>, and the Electoral Code of Ukraine<sup>6</sup>.

Implementing publicity, as a general principle of public administration, which means the openness and transparency of public authorities' functioning, ensures the connection of public bodies and their officials with the society and citizens. The principle of publicity implies the openness of the government, transparency of the public administration activity for citizens through their right to influence the work of the authorities and their officials; taking into account the public opinion when making public-administrative decisions; public control over the activities of the administrative apparatus and other types of control over

<sup>1</sup> Закон про органи самоорганізації населення 2001 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2625-14>>.

<sup>2</sup> Закон про громадські об'єднання 2012 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4572-17>>.

<sup>3</sup> Закон про політичні партії 2001 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2365-14>>.

<sup>4</sup> Закон про місцеве самоврядування в Україні 1997 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/280/97-%D0%B2%D1%80>> (2020, May, 01).

<sup>5</sup> Конституція України 1996 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80>> (2019, September, 03).

<sup>6</sup> Виборчий кодекс України 2019 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/396-20#n4129>> (2019, September, 19).

the observance of the constitutionally enshrined interests of society, the rights and freedoms of citizens<sup>1</sup>. The publicity principle is based on understanding of publicity in essence, while J. Weintraub and K. Kumar divided it into two components: that which is open, explicit, accessible to others as a counterpart to what is hidden (it creates 'the private'); and that which is collective, or impacts collective interests, as opposed to individual (private)<sup>2</sup>.

It is important to emphasize the significant theoretical differences between the public sphere as a political area of collective action, and public life as polymorphic communication. This was also stressed by O. Volkov who noted that the form of public life is a historically and culturally specific set of possible ways of public behavior and communication, which effectively defines the public agenda<sup>3</sup>.

The public sphere is the institutional aspects of public life that may or may not acquire specific political functions. An important component of the political public sphere is communication and an adequate level of public information policy.

That is why at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the concept of 'public sphere' became one of the key concepts in the analysis of problems and prospects of forming civil society, the basis of which was laid by the theory of communicative action proposed by J. Habermas and the six normative conditions for the functioning of the public sphere, in particular:

1. The public sphere should exist as an entity autonomous from other structures and the state. That is to say, the discourse of the public sphere is driven not by administrative and economic mechanisms, but by mechanisms of purely communicative orientation that represent the interests of all citizens.

2. In the process of forming the public sphere, entities articulate significant interests which by definition can be reviewed critically, thus, allowing an exchange of substantiated positions.

3. The public sphere includes a self-reflection element, without which there can be no exchange of claims since it requires that everyone should be able "to distance" themselves from their own self.

4. Participants in the public sphere should be able to exchange their roles with one another.

5. Honesty is an integral part of the entire public communication process, which emphasizes the importance of intentions of each participant.

6. Equality is one of the keystones of the public sphere<sup>4</sup>.

Therefore, we can summarize that the main indicator of the public sphere is its ability to take collective action, based on the articulation of common interests through a continuous rational discussion. Politics is born when there are interests that bring people together. The most important indicator of public policy functioning is an open discussion which promotes practical realization of public interests.

At the same time, the main characteristic of public policy is, above all, the impossibility of its implementation without communication of public groups regarding the goals and tasks of public authorities and local governments. Also, the important features of public policy include:

- communication process, as public policy is always information interaction;
- openness, which means the availability of public space for a defined range of actors (citizens, mass media, civil institutions, the state, etc.) and a maximally free exchange of information;
- provision of conditions for public participation in the political process, including through the creation of discussion platforms and formation of public opinion;
- a meaningful focus on the formulation and satisfaction of public interests in order to achieve the common public good.

It can be argued that when public interests are directed at the activity of the state, the public sphere acquires a political dimension. Even parliamentary debates become part of this area, not due to publicity, but because they are related to satisfaction of the public interest.

The modern scientific sources have paid considerable attention to the issues of reconciliation of public, social and private interests, representation of interests in bodies of power, etc. However, the issues of reconciliation of interests of representative bodies of different levels, the realization of which would

<sup>1</sup> Безверхнюк, Т.М., Котова, Н.О., Попов, С.А. (2011). *Управління проектами в публічній сфері*: навчальний посібник. Одеса: ОРІДУ НАДУ, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Wientraub, J., Kumar, K. (1997). *Public and Private in Thought and Practice. Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

<sup>3</sup> Волков, А.М. (2015). Публичное администрирование: вопросы надзора и контроля. *Административное и муниципальное право*, 7, 738-743.

<sup>4</sup> Хабермас, Ю. (2006). *Залучення іншого: студії з політичної теорії*. Львів: Астролябія, 416.

ensure the integrity of representation of the interests of society, still remain unresolved. Therefore, the interaction of the Verkhovna Rada with the regional and local councils should be aimed at forming the public interests of the entire state that would not conflict, creating conflict between the central and local power, but rather supplement one another by way of a rational discussion, prioritization, hierarchization and articulation of the interests that are most important for the society. Such harmonization of social interests of different levels can be achieved by their effective interaction, taking into account the vertical line of interests not only from top to bottom, but also vice versa, which will make it possible to speak about the full-fledged functioning of the system of representative governance in Ukraine.

The system of representative governance, as noted by P. Vorona, is an ideal type of the most perfect political system; yet, as it follows from the Ukrainian reality, the degree of adaptation of a certain human community to representative governance depends on the level of the general development of the community itself<sup>1</sup>. Nowadays, despite the implementation of the local self-government reform – decentralization of powers – it is quite early to speak about the development of the representative governance system, for its interests and problems are still ignored by the state, making it incapable.

The interaction of the VRU with local councils, like any interaction within the public administration system, should have a clear legal regulation. However, none of the current legal acts regulating local government in Ukraine has defined any forms or principles of this interaction. The only legal ground that determines the lines of interaction and subordination of local councils is Chapter XI of the Constitution of Ukraine, in particular Art. 140, which defines the levels of representation of interests according to the administrative and territorial structure, i.e. local councils (village, settlement, city) and local self-government bodies representing the common interests of the communities of villages, settlements and cities (district and regional councils). Thus, there are constitutional and other legal relationships between the VRU and local councils that determine their interdependence and mutual responsibility.

The parliament is vested with broad powers over these bodies, namely: the right to amend constitutional provisions on representative and other bodies of local self-government; to determine, exclusively by law, the basis for local self-government (formation, activities and responsibilities of local governments); to set the principles of internal and foreign policy in the field of local self-government; to approve the revenues and expenditures of local governments in the State Budget of Ukraine; to appoint regular and extraordinary local elections; to control the activity of local governments in the forms and limits defined by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, etc.

Local councils' feedback to the VRU is performed through appeals to the legislative and other central authorities to protect their constitutional rights, submitted in the form of statements, remarks, proposals, recommendations or complaints.

The liaison between the parliament and local councils is organizationally mediated through coordination, consultative, advisory, expert and other structures, which can be formed both in the VRU: Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – the Committee on State Building, Local Governance, Regional and Urban Development<sup>2</sup>, the Coordination Council on Local Self-Government under the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine<sup>3</sup>, and the Office of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its structural units, in particular the Local Authorities and Local Governments Liaison Office; in various public authorities working on a permanent or temporary basis; and indirectly – through organizations and associations, whose forms of interaction are participation in consultations with the VRU and other authorities by providing associations' opinions on draft legal acts concerning local and regional development issues<sup>4</sup>. The scheme of interaction between the VRU, local councils and representative organizations is shown in Fig. 2.

<sup>1</sup> Ворона, П.В.(2001). Особливості становлення та розвитку представницької влади в Україні (на прикладі місцевого самоврядування). *Теорія та практика державного управління*, 4 (35), 6. <<http://dspace.puet.edu.ua/bitstream/123456789/1668/1/01.pdf>> (2020, May, 01).

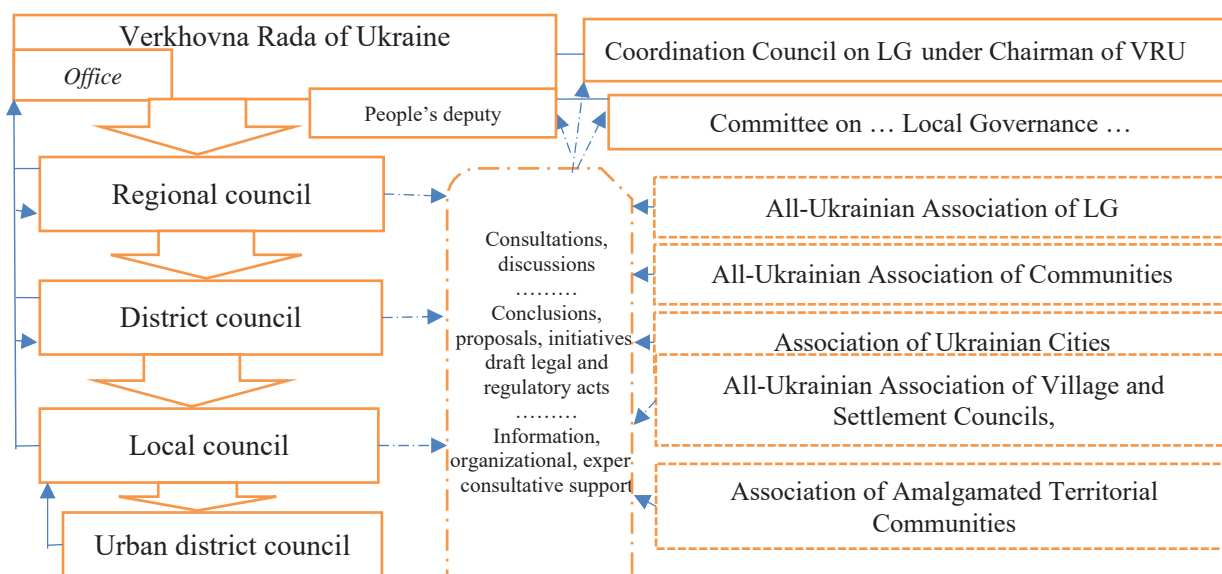
<sup>2</sup> Комітет з питань організації державної влади, місцевого самоврядування, регіонального розвитку та містобудування (Верховна Рада України). *Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України*. <[http://komsamovr.rada.gov.ua/news/Pro\\_komitet/zag\\_inf/79897.html](http://komsamovr.rada.gov.ua/news/Pro_komitet/zag_inf/79897.html)> (2020, May, 01).

<sup>3</sup> Розпорядження про внесення змін до Положення про Консультативну раду з питань місцевого самоврядування 2019 (Верховна Рада України). *Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України*. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/249/19-%D1%80%D0%B3>> (2019, September, 16).

<sup>4</sup> Закон про асоціації органів місцевого самоврядування 2009 (Верховна Рада України). *Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України*. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1275-17>>.

A. Troian defines the relationships mediated through associations as relations of public attorneys and representatives of local councils with the VRU<sup>1</sup>. The author also notes that, as before, their interaction, despite the number of regulatory acts adopted within the framework of the reform, is marked with inadequate methods of regulating social processes and imposition of top-down administrative decisions that are not always transparent and open. In the first place, it concerns the VRU's neglecting the proposals of local self-government associations on the organization and functioning of local governments.

The main reason for this, in our opinion, lies in the lack of clear mechanisms and principles of interaction between the VRU and local councils. The principles of interaction of the VRU with other public administration bodies are explicitly regulated by the legislation. Within the framework of legislative, constituent and control functions, the parliament interacts with the President of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine, the Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, and other bodies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, public authorities and their officials. However, within the framework of implementing the representative function, the principles of interaction are blurred and not legally enshrined.



**Fig. 2. The scheme of interaction of representative bodies with organizations**

*Source: the author's elaboration.*

Therefore, in order to formulate the basic principles of interaction between the VRU and local councils, it is worthwhile to refer to the general clearly defined, legally enshrined principles of interaction between public authorities. For example, the basic principles of interaction between the VRU and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine are: publicity and transparency of work, systemic explanation in the mass media of the purpose and basic provisions of government legislative initiatives<sup>2</sup>. The basic principles of interaction between the VRU and the subjects of public administration are: legality, priority of general interests over mercantile ones, consideration of common interests and mutual responsibility, preservation of independence of municipal authorities, compliance with the requirements of current legislation<sup>3</sup>, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Троян, А.В. (2010). Взаємовідносини Верховної Ради України та органів місцевого самоврядування в контексті правових позицій Конституційного суду України. *Науковий вісник Академії муніципального управління, серія "Право", 1*. <[http://www.nbu.gov.ua/portal/Soc\\_Gum/Nvamu\\_pr/2010\\_1/11.pdf](http://www.nbu.gov.ua/portal/Soc_Gum/Nvamu_pr/2010_1/11.pdf)>, 178> (2020, Мау, 01).

<sup>2</sup> *Розпорядження про організацію взаємодії Кабінету Міністрів України з Верховною Радою України 2005* (Кабінет Міністрів України). *Офіційний сайт Кабінету Міністрів України*. <<https://www.kmu.gov.ua/npras/13741166>>.

<sup>3</sup> Гошовська, В.А. (заг. ред.) (2013). *Взаємодія Верховної Ради України із суб'єктами державного управління: історія та сучасний стан: наукова розробка*. Київ: НАДУ, 39.

It should also be emphasized that the interaction of the VRU with local councils is to be based, first of all, on one of the key principles of public authority – parity i.e. equality of rights and responsibilities of all participants, mutual consideration of the positions of each party in the elaboration of joint decisions and development of regulatory acts, which, as H. Panchenko notes, will contribute to the formation of a unified integrated system of the representative power in Ukraine and/or change of its state<sup>1</sup>.

In view of the above, we have proposed the general and specific principles of interaction between the VRU and local councils. The general principles of interaction include: lawfulness, publicity and transparency, free access and exchange of information, openness and tolerance of the parties, consideration of common interests and mutual responsibility; the specific principles are as follows: planning of joint activities; developing common cooperation goals; ensuring a common position in cooperation with the media; holding open public discussions; coherence of actions on forming and implementing state policy in the field of local self-government; allocation of resources adequate to the content of state policy and public-administrative functions; involvement of the public in discussion of draft regulatory acts and decision-making, parity in creation of working commissions and other organizational structures for development of recommendations, conclusions, etc.

In **conclusion**, we have to state that the Ukrainian system of representative democracy is still in the process of its formation. Despite the adoption of a number of legal acts regulating the sphere of interaction between public administration subjects, no real mechanisms for harmonization of territorial interests of society and representative bodies have been elaborated yet. This hinders significantly the formation of the representative governance system, the main subjects of which are the parliament, local councils and other representative organizations. Their interaction should be based on clearly defined principles, understandable and legally enshrined rules, equality of rights and responsibilities of all participants, and most importantly, the reconciliation of their interests, which will affect the development of the public sphere and democratic processes in Ukraine.

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