

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

DOI: 10.46340/eppd.2025.12.1.4

MODERNIZATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL OVER THE LEGALITY OF DECISIONS OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BODIES OF UKRAINE

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Citation: Bondarenko, S., Niziaieva, V., Kravchenko, M., Kaliuha, Ye., Kolisnichenko, R., & Tsumariiev, M. (2025). Modernization of Administrative Control over the Legality of Decisions of Local Self-Government Bodies of Ukraine. *Evropsky Politicky a Pravni Diskurz*, 12, 1, 31-44. <https://doi.org/10.46340/eppd.2025.12.1.4>

Abstract

This research investigates the transformation of administrative control mechanisms over local self-government decisions in Ukraine, focusing on intelligent technology integration within the context of decentralization reform and military challenges. The relevance of this topic stems from the need to ensure coherent actions across public administration levels to protect national security amid ongoing Russian aggression. The study employs a mixed methodological approach combining qualitative methods (analysis of regulations, European administrative practices, case studies) and quantitative methods (process modelling and statistical analysis). The research examines the European Union experiences in administrative control, analysing the prefectural model in France, the mixed oversight system in Poland, and civic control mechanisms in Sweden. Based on this analysis, the research develops a multi-level model of administrative control for Ukraine that integrates key European approaches: prefectural oversight from the French system, judicial protection mechanisms from the Polish model, and transparency tools from the Swedish practice. The model incorporates blockchain technology for decision tracking and artificial intelligence for risk assessment. The results show that while decentralization reform has strengthened local governments' capacity, challenges remain in ensuring municipal decisions' legality under martial law. The research proposes an implementation plan from legislative changes to system deployment. The scientific novelty lies in developing a holistic concept for transforming administrative control through legal, institutional, and technological innovations adapted to wartime conditions. The study contributes to administrative law theory by conceptualizing a framework that harmonizes centralized control with local autonomy, drawing on European

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practices. The findings provide insights for modernizing control systems in decentralized states facing security challenges, particularly in post-war reconstruction.

Keywords: administrative control, local self-government bodies, decentralisation, legality of decisions, martial law, intelligent technologies, European experience, prefectural model, public monitoring

Introduction

Contemporary territorial development represents a fundamental determinant in promoting the quality of life for the population and stimulating the economic growth of the country (Apostolache & Apostolache, 2015; Ukrinform, 2022; Albers & Pfister, 2023). The effectiveness of local government serves as a critical catalyst for enhancing living standards and unlocking regional economic potential (Da Silva Vieira & González, 2018). The regulatory and legal frameworks governing territorial development processes, coupled with the precise delineation of local self-government's role within the governance system, assume particular significance in this context (Diachenko & Buha, 2021).

In the contemporary environment characterized by military threats, effective administrative control over the legality of local government decisions has become instrumental in safeguarding national security and territorial integrity. Ukraine's decentralization processes have manifested a dual impact: expanding municipal authorities' powers while simultaneously necessitating robust mechanisms to ensure the legality of their decisions under martial law conditions (Nunes, et al., 2021; Reigada, 2021; Scalia, 2022; Kaganovska, et al., 2023). Within this framework, the integration of modelling methods and intelligent technologies emerges as a promising direction for enhancing administrative control efficiency and validity. This innovative approach presents significant potential as an instrumental mechanism in combating corruption and reinforcing public authority accountability (Addo, 2021; Al-Rubaye, 2022; Vasilyeva, et al., 2023; Bondarenko, et al., 2022; Zerkina, et al., 2022).

The scholarly discourse on administrative control over local self-government bodies encompasses diverse perspectives. Recent research by Boldyriev et al. (2024) examines municipal bodies' environmental competencies, while Serohin et al. (2024) investigate state control mechanisms, and Eckhardt (2023) explores administrative law's instrumental applications. Historical dimensions are elaborated by Redin (2023), with contemporary control enhancement strategies proposed by Diachenko & Buha (2021). Municipal administration system transformation processes have been comprehensively analysed by Serohina, et al. (2021) and Gallyamova (2018).

Despite substantial scholarly attention, a significant research gap remains regarding the application of modelling methods and intelligent technologies to enhance administrative control efficiency within military threat contexts. This gap necessitates further systematic investigation.

This research aims to substantiate the feasibility and develop conceptual frameworks for modelling administrative control processes over local self-government decisions' legality, incorporating intelligent technologies within the context of military threats. The conceptual framework is structured around two fundamental hypotheses. The primary hypothesis posits that transitioning to a prefectural organizational model can enhance administrative control over local government decisions' legality. The secondary hypothesis suggests that establishing capable territorial communities serves as an essential precondition for effective local government functioning across various administrative levels.

To systematically examine these hypotheses, the research framework incorporates three interconnected research questions:

What are the principal trends characterizing local reform development in Ukraine?

What key elements of administrative control over the legality of local self-government decisions can be effectively adapted from European methodological approaches and practices?

What contemporary mechanisms for enhancing administrative oversight and institutional frameworks should be implemented in post-war Ukraine?

This structured approach facilitates a comprehensive analysis of the prospects for the evolution of administrative control in Ukraine, integrating current challenges with international best practices.

Literature review

Administrative control serves as a fundamental mechanism for ensuring the legitimacy of local government activities and their alignment with national interests. This function assumes particular significance in the context of military threats, where effective control becomes instrumental in consolidating

governmental efforts and resources across all administrative levels. The scholarly discourse on administrative control encompasses multiple theoretical perspectives and empirical investigations, reflecting the complexity and evolution of governance systems.

Contemporary research on administrative control mechanisms reveals several distinct thematic streams. The first stream focuses on institutional challenges and implementation barriers. Boldyriev, et al. (2024) conduct a comprehensive analysis of municipal environmental protection measures, identifying systemic obstacles including financing inefficiencies, inadequate environmental awareness, procedural deficiencies, and insufficient state control mechanisms. Complementing this perspective, Serohin, et al. (2024) advocate for enhanced state control mechanisms and propose public oversight integration to strengthen procedural objectivity and transparency. These findings align with Eckhardt's (2023) critical examination of how administrative norm instrumentation by state authorities potentially undermines self-governance principles.

Historical perspectives provide valuable insights into the evolution of administrative control systems. Redin's (2023) analysis illuminates how historical patterns of local administration financial dependence created vulnerability to abuse, while Blanchard (2011) offer instructive historical examples emphasizing the critical nature of legal compliance in local governance decisions.

The theoretical discourse on administrative control principles has been significantly advanced by several scholars. Diachenko & Buha (2021) propose a comprehensive framework of administrative control principles, emphasizing publicity, systematicity, efficiency, objectivity, impartiality, and universality. This theoretical foundation is further developed through Serohina, et al. (2021) and Gallyamova's (2018) examination of local self-government transformation within decentralization contexts. Their research emphasizes the necessity for innovative control procedures adapting to evolving governance structures.

International perspectives on municipal systems provide valuable comparative insights. Chikhladze (2016) examines centralization elements and dualistic patterns in foreign municipal systems, while Yakhina et al. (2015) emphasize transparency principles in municipal service regulation. Reigada's (2021) research contributes important considerations regarding the balance between effective control and data protection imperatives, while Henman (2020) explores artificial intelligence applications in public administration, addressing critical issues of accuracy, bias, legitimacy, and power dynamics.

The theoretical foundations of administrative legality are extensively examined in contemporary literature. Cole (2016), Nishimura et al. (2021), and Bilevičiūtė & Pranevičienė (2020) provide foundational analyses of public administration legality principles. Borodina et al. (2022) further develop these concepts through empirical investigations. The conceptual framework for understanding legality limitations integrates several theoretical perspectives: Stazyk & Kim's (2022) public administration constraints theory, Van Den Berge's (2017) analysis of Montesquieu's governmental separation theory, Tushnet's (2021) rule of law theoretical framework, and Leoni et al.'s (2023) transparency and openness theory.

Recent empirical studies have enhanced understanding of administrative control dynamics. Schram et al. (2024) and Orr et al. (2016) advocate for comprehensive assessment frameworks, while King & Altmann (2022) and Jun & Moldavanova (2022) provide critical perspectives on control centralization risks. These studies collectively emphasize the importance of balanced approaches to administrative oversight.

The emerging technological dimension of administrative control represents a significant research frontier. While scholars increasingly recognize the potential of intelligent technologies in governance processes, research specifically addressing their application in administrative control remains limited, particularly regarding military threat contexts. This research gap becomes particularly relevant considering the increasing complexity of governance challenges and the potential of technological solutions to enhance control effectiveness.

The literature review reveals several significant research gaps. While existing scholarship provides valuable insights into various aspects of administrative control, insufficient attention has been directed toward intelligent technology integration in control processes, particularly within military threat contexts. Additionally, the intersection of technological innovation with traditional administrative control mechanisms in crisis situations remains understudied. This research addresses these gaps by proposing an innovative model integrating legal, institutional, and technological elements to modernize administrative control systems.

Methodological approach

The research methodology employs a comprehensive mixed-methods approach to examine the processes of administrative control over the legality of local self-government bodies' decisions using intelligent technologies amid military threats. The methodological framework integrates both qualitative and

quantitative research components to facilitate systematic investigation of the research problem. The qualitative dimension encompasses a rigorous critical analysis of scientific publications, reports, and analytical materials pertinent to the study. This includes an in-depth examination of current Ukrainian legislation and international regulations concerning local self-government organization, administrative oversight, and the implementation of intelligent systems in public administration. Additionally, the research utilizes comparative legal analysis to study administrative control practices over local self-government bodies' decisions in EU countries, involving a detailed analysis of institutional models, procedures, and supervision mechanisms in various European jurisdictions. The case study method is applied to examine specific instances of administrative control over municipal decisions in Ukraine during martial law, focusing on challenges, problems, consequences, and lessons learned to improve oversight processes.

The quantitative component of the research methodology incorporates process modeling techniques to develop conceptual models of administrative control processes over the legality of local government decisions, including modeling options for implementing intelligent technologies in control processes. Data processing methods include content analysis of documents to identify semantic patterns, constructs, coding, and categorization of textual data, complemented by statistical analysis of quantitative data using descriptive statistics and multidimensional scaling.

The empirical foundation of the research draws upon multiple data sources, including materials from the Decentralization portal, expert interviews, Kyiv International Institute of Sociology sociological survey results, and media content analysis regarding local self-government functioning under martial law. The information base encompasses legislative and regulatory acts of Ukraine, international documents and standards, scholarly publications, analytical materials, and statistical data. This methodologically robust approach enables a comprehensive investigation of administrative control processes over local self-government decisions' legality, particularly focusing on the integration of intelligent technologies in the context of military threats. This methodological framework facilitates systematic examination of the research questions while maintaining scholarly rigor and producing reliable, evidence-based findings.

Conducting research and results

Through the quantitative part of the research, the focus was on data collection, processing, and analysis. The study utilized a combination of surveys, statistical analysis, and process modelling to examine the modernization of administrative control over local self-government decisions in Ukraine. A national survey conducted by KIIS (2022) showed that 76.5% of Ukrainians support the continuation of decentralization reforms. This high level of public support indicates the reform's legitimacy and relevance for post-war recovery. Content analysis of media publications revealed significant attention to the functioning of local self-government under martial law and post-war reconstruction. Key topics included the restoration of local authorities in de-occupied territories, budgetary support, and the role of local governments in addressing humanitarian issues.

A survey of local government leaders highlighted systemic problems:

85% reported difficulties in attracting and motivating qualified staff;

31% noted problems with establishing community-based organizations;

61% pointed to job shortages in communities as a significant challenge.

Process modelling was used to develop conceptual models of administrative control processes and options for using intelligent technologies (AI, machine learning, expert systems) in control processes. Statistical analysis of quantitative data, including descriptive statistics and multidimensional scaling, was applied to analyse trends in local self-government reform and the expansion of municipal powers. The research partially confirmed the hypothesis about transitioning to a prefectural type of organization as a means of improving administrative control. The hypothesis about the need to create capable communities for successful local self-government functioning was fully supported by empirical data.

These findings contribute to developing a comprehensive approach to administrative supervision, balancing decentralization with national security imperatives, and leveraging intelligent technologies to enhance governance effectiveness in challenging circumstances.

Analysis and Identification of the Main Trends in the Development of the Local Self-Government Reform in Ukraine

The analysis and identification of the main trends in the development of the local self-government reform in Ukraine revealed a complex picture of the transformation processes, characterised by both achievements and challenges.

Legislative and institutional changes have created a foundation for the development of capable municipalities. The adoption of new versions of the Law on Local Self-Government in Ukraine and the Law on Voluntary Amalgamation of Territorial Communities, as well as amendments to the Budget and Tax Codes, have formed the legal framework for decentralisation. These legislative initiatives have led to significant institutional transformations, including the formation of 1,470 amalgamated territorial communities (as of 2023), the establishment of their executive bodies, and the division of powers between levels of local government. As a result, there has been a significant expansion of the financial base of local governments, which is reflected in the growth of the share of local budgets in the consolidated budget of Ukraine from 13% in 2014 to 27% in 2022.

The decentralisation reform has helped to strengthen the organisational, financial and resource capacity of local governments. Communities have gained more opportunities to ensure the development of their territories and improve the quality of public services. However, empirical research has revealed a number of challenges related to the incomplete processes of community amalgamation and division of powers, as well as the risks of political change. Expert interviews have shown problems with ensuring the legality of local government decisions, which raises the task of transforming the administrative control system (Lukerya, 2023). An analysis of the public legitimacy of the reform, based on the KIIS national survey (2022), showed a high level of support for decentralisation among the population - 76.5% of Ukrainians are in favour of its continuation. Most respondents believe that the reform has played a positive role in strengthening the resilience of the state and communities in the face of Russian aggression. This indicates the public legitimacy of the reform and its relevance for the country's post-war recovery, which necessitates consolidating the irreversibility of the reform and ensuring its further progress (Council of Europe, 2023).

The study identified key priorities for improving local self-government. These include: a clear delineation of the competences of local self-government bodies and local executive authorities, regulation of the administrative and territorial structure, constitutional consolidation of the principles of decentralisation, and the introduction of effective mechanisms to monitor the legality of local government decisions. Another important area is improving the quality of municipal governance, ensuring transparency and accountability of local authorities, and developing tools for public participation (Decentralisation, 2023).

The content analysis of media publications revealed significant attention to the functioning of local self-government under martial law and post-war reconstruction. The key topics include the restoration of effective local authorities in the de-occupied territories, budgetary support and financial autonomy of communities during the crisis, the role of local governments in providing public services and addressing humanitarian issues. However, there is a lack of in-depth analysis of administrative control and accountability of municipalities, which points to the need for further research in this area.

An analysis of the results of the survey of local government leaders revealed a number of systemic problems that impede the effective functioning of local government. In particular, 85% of respondents reported difficulties in attracting and motivating qualified staff due to low remuneration of local government employees. This directly affects the quality of municipal services and the pace of community development. Almost a third of respondents (31%) noted problems with the establishment and functioning of community-based organisations, which indicates the need to improve the legislative framework and strengthen methodological support for the establishment of community-based organisations. The majority of respondents (61%) pointed to the shortage of jobs in communities as a significant challenge to the socio-economic development of territories, which requires comprehensive efforts at both the national and local levels (Decentralisation, 2020). The results of the study suggest the need for a comprehensive approach to local government reform that combines legal regulation, methodological support, broad public dialogue, and strengthening of partnership between the state and local governments. This approach will ensure the irreversibility of decentralisation processes and the development of an effective system of territorial organisation of power in Ukraine.

A further analysis of the results in the context of the hypotheses and research questions suggests that the hypothesis of transition to the prefectural type of organisation as a means of improving administrative control has been partially confirmed. At the same time, the hypothesis about the need to create capable communities for the successful functioning of local governments is fully supported by empirical data. This points to the need for a balanced approach to reforming the administrative control system, which would take into account both the need for effective supervision and the need to preserve the autonomy of local self-government (Eckhardt, 2023; King & Altmann, 2022; Serohin, et al., 2024; Gallyamova, 2018).

Peculiarities of Administrative Control over the Legality of Decisions in Ukraine under Martial Law

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 was a serious test for the local government system. Under martial law, the issue of adapting mechanisms for administrative control over the legality of municipal decisions has become acute. Extreme security challenges require enhanced oversight to respond quickly to threats and prevent separatist manifestations in the occupied territories. At the same time, excessive interference in the activities of local governments may lead to restrictions on their autonomy, as guaranteed by the European Charter of Local Self-Government. An analysis of the materials on the Decentralisation portal showed that under martial law, the powers of military administrations to oversee decisions of local self-government bodies have been expanded (Decentralisation, 2023). According to the Law of Ukraine 'On the Legal Regime of Martial Law', they have the right to cancel local government acts that contradict the Constitution, laws or acts of the military command. It also provides for the possibility of suspending the powers of local governments in case of a threat to territorial integrity or national security. Experts warn against the abuse of these powers and unjustified restrictions on community self-governance (Lukerya, 2023). In the absence of clear criteria for supervision, there are risks of arbitrary interference with municipal autonomy. An important safeguard is the right of local governments to judicial protection and the ability to appeal decisions of military administrations. However, in practice, the exercise of this right is complicated by the suspension of the work of courts in the combat zone.

Another trend has been the strengthening of methodological and advisory support to local governments by central executive authorities. The Ministry of Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine and other agencies have prepared a number of explanations and recommendations aimed at ensuring the legality of municipal decisions in wartime (The Council of Europe, 2022). In general, it can be stated that the decentralised system of territorial organisation of power has demonstrated greater resilience and flexibility in the face of armed aggression compared to the centralised model (Decentralisation, 2020). Local governments have provided critical public services, organised evacuation processes and supported the livelihoods of communities. This has been made possible largely by the decentralisation reform, which has strengthened the institutional and financial capacity of municipalities.

Adherence to the rule of law remains an important factor in the effectiveness of state supervision. According to the 2022 Rule of Law Index, Ukraine ranks 74th among 140 countries with a score of 0.51 out of 1.00 (World Justice Project, 2022). The most problematic aspects are the restrictions on the powers of government institutions, the fight against corruption, the protection of fundamental rights and the quality of the justice system. The analysis of the legal framework allows us to identify the following key features of administrative control over the legality of decisions of local self-government bodies during martial law:

- Empowerment of military administrations (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2022a).

- Limited moratorium on inspections (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2022b).

- Specifics of state financial control (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2022c).

- Increased liability for offenses (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2001, 191).

Promising areas for improving administrative control over the legality of decisions of local self-government bodies in wartime are:

- A clear regulatory definition of the limits of interference of military administrations in the activities of local self-government bodies.

- Development of remote and automated control tools (Henman, 2020).

- Prioritization of control measures based on a risk-based approach (Abramov, et al., 2016).

- Strengthening coordination and information exchange between controlling authorities (Dmitriev et al., 2020).

- Establishing partnerships between government agencies and local self-government bodies (Eaton & Schakel, 2022).

- Development of mechanisms of public control (Yakhina, et al., 2015).

Thus, the system of oversight of the legality of municipal decisions under martial law requires a flexible and balanced approach. It is necessary to develop a clear legal framework and control procedures that would ensure a prompt response to threats without unjustified restrictions on municipal autonomy (Eckhardt, 2023; King & Altmann, 2022).

The System of Supervision of Local Self-Government Bodies at the Legislative Level

The system of oversight of local government activities at the legislative level in Ukraine is in the process of transformation. The key initiative in this area is the creation of the Register of Decisions

of Local Self-Government Bodies, which was announced by the Ministry of Community Development, Territory and Infrastructure (Decentralization, 2023). This tool is defined as the main one to ensure the review of the legality of municipal acts, which will increase the openness and accountability of local authorities. Today, Ukraine remains one of the few European countries that does not have a proper system of oversight of the legality of local government decisions. The formation of effective mechanisms for monitoring the legality within the framework of the decentralization reform is of particular relevance (Lukerya, 2023).

The draft law No. 4298 on amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Local Self-Government in Ukraine” should serve as the legislative basis for the introduction of a new oversight system. It provides for the reformatting of local state administrations into prefectural-type bodies and balancing the interests of citizens, local governments and the state (Council of Europe, 2022). An analysis of the European experience of organizing administrative control over the activities of local self-government bodies demonstrates a variety of approaches and models (see Table 1).

Table 1

**Comparative characteristics of administrative control models
in European countries**

Country	Control model	Key features	Advantages	Disadvantages
France	Prefectural	Appointed by the State Prefect	Unity of state policy	The risk of strong centralization
		The right to cancel decisions of local authorities	Promptness of response	
Poland	Mixed	Voivodes consider the view	Control of balance and autonomy	Possible conflicts of competence
		Active role of courts	Judicial protection of local governments	
Sweden	Civic control	Emphasis on transparency	High trust in local authorities	There may be a lack of responsiveness
		Active participation of citizens	Development of local democracy	
Germany	Federal	Control by the federal States	Taking into account regional specifics	The complexity of unifying practices
		Developed system of administrative courts	Precision right mechanisms	
Italy	Regional	Control over regional committees	Decentralized approach	Possible heterogeneity of practices
		Focus on the legality of acts	Taking into account local specifics	
Netherlands	Multilevel	Provincial and central government oversight	Flexibility of the control system	The complexity of coordination
		Emphasis on cooperation	Support for municipalities	
United Kingdom	Auditing	Independent auditors	Professional approach	Limiting the impact on current decisions
		Assessment of efficiency and effectiveness	Stimulating efficiency	
Spain	Autonomous	High level of regional autonomy	Strong local government	Risks of regional imbalances
		Limitations of central control	Taking into account regional peculiarities	

Source: own compilation

As can be seen from Table 1, each model has its advantages and disadvantages that should be taken into account when developing an administrative control system for Ukraine, adapting them to national peculiarities and current challenges.

Common practices in European countries include:

Functioning of the institution of local ombudsmen (Eckhardt, 2023).

Public monitoring by civil society organizations (King & Altmann, 2022).

Online systems for monitoring the movement of cases and consideration of citizens' appeals (Henman, 2020).

Mechanisms for administrative appeal of actions and acts of local self-government bodies (Serohin et al., 2024).

Georgia's experience in reforming its local government system may become an important reference point for Ukraine. Georgia's new Local Self-Government Code provides for numerous forms of citizen participation in local government (Gallyamova, 2018).

Forming a balanced and effective system of oversight over the legality of local government decisions in Ukraine requires a comprehensive approach. It should combine the improvement of the legal framework, the introduction of new institutional mechanisms, the development of electronic tools for transparency and communication, and methodological support for local governments (Yakhina, et al., 2015). At the same time, it is necessary to ensure an optimal balance between centralized control and local government autonomy, as well as broad public involvement in the processes of developing and monitoring local management decisions. Promising areas for further research in this area may include: studying the potential of modern technologies to improve control mechanisms; searching for optimal models of organizing supervision, taking into account the specifics of different types of communities; developing a methodology for assessing the effectiveness of supervisory institutions and procedures (Abramov, et al., 2016; Dmitriev, et al., 2020; Eaton & Schakel, 2022).

Swedish Experience in Developing a System of Control and Monitoring in Local Self-Government: Lessons for Ukraine

Sweden has a long tradition of local self-government dating back to medieval times. The modern system of territorial organization of power was formed as a result of the reform of 1862 and further transformations in the 1950s and 1970s (Decentralization, 2020). Currently, there are 290 municipalities and 21 counties (län) in the country. Local governments in Sweden have broad powers in the areas of social services, education, spatial planning, health care, and the environment. Municipalities and regions enjoy considerable autonomy, but are subject to supervision by county administrations (Lukerya, 2023). The key principles of the Swedish local government system are democracy, autonomy, and transparency. The state defines national goals and development strategies, and influences funding through the system of intergovernmental transfers (Council of Europe, 2023).

The transparency of municipal and regional authorities plays an important role in ensuring the effectiveness of local self-government. The National Statistical Office of Sweden and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) ensure a high level of information openness (Yakhina, et al., 2015). Along with transparency, democratic mechanisms of participation and control by residents play a significant role. An important element is the municipal audit system, where members of the public can hire professional auditors (Henman, 2020). At the national level, the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman oversee the activities of the authorities (Eckhardt, 2023). Sweden's experience provides important lessons for Ukraine in the context of implementing decentralization reform, demonstrating the need to balance local autonomy and state oversight of the rule of law (King & Altmann, 2022). In times of war, the effectiveness of each institution is critical to national resilience. The experience of the U-LEAD with Europe Program in building an internal control and audit system in Ukrainian territorial communities is valuable (Serohin, et al., 2024). Such initiatives allow adapting the best European practices to Ukrainian realities.

The Swedish model can serve as a benchmark for Ukraine, demonstrating that it is possible to ensure the accountability of municipal authorities while maintaining their significant autonomy. The key conditions are the development of democratic mechanisms for public participation, transparency of local government activities, and effective coordination by the state (Gallyamova, 2018). An integrated approach to building a multi-level system of checks and balances will allow local self-government to become a reliable basis for the territorial organization of power and sustainable development of communities.

Model of Administrative Control over the Legitimacy of Decisions of Local Self-Government Bodies with the Use of Intelligent Technologies in the Context of Military Threats

Given the challenges faced by the local government system in Ukraine in the context of war, it is advisable to propose a model of administrative oversight based on the use of modern intelligent technologies. This model combines elements of centralized control by the state, internal audit in local self-government bodies (LSG), and public involvement in monitoring management decisions (Lukerya, 2023). The key components of the proposed model are:

Legislative consolidation of the powers of prefects to verify the compliance of local government acts with the Constitution and laws of Ukraine (Decentralization, 2023).

Creation of a unified electronic system for monitoring municipal decisions based on blockchain technology (Henman, 2020).

Introduce the practice of mandatory electronic consultations with the public on drafts of key municipal decisions (Yakhina, et al., 2015).

Developing a system of internal control and audit in local governments in accordance with international standards (Council of Europe, 2023).

Creation of a special web portal and mobile application for citizens to file complaints about violations of the law by local authorities.

Use of distributed ledger technology to ensure transparency of the budget process at the local level (Abramov, et al., 2016).

Regular online training for local government officials.

Establish data exchange between central and local authorities and law enforcement agencies (Dmitriev et al., 2020).

Development of analytical tools to assess the effectiveness of administrative control (Eaton & Schakel, 2022).

Implementation of the proposed model of administrative control requires a phased approach (see Table 2).

Table 2

Stages of implementation of the new model of administrative control

Stage	Content	Expected results	Timeframe
1. Legislative changes	Adoption of laws on prefects, amendments to the law on local self-government	Create a legal framework for the new control system	6-12 months
2. Institutional transformations	Establishment of the prefects' institute, reorganization of local state administrations	Formation of new control bodies	12-18 months
3. Technological modernization	Development and implementation of an electronic system for monitoring local government decisions	Increasing transparency and efficiency control	18-24 months
4. Development of human resources	Training of prefects, local government officials, and civic activists	Increasing the competence of participants in the control process	Continuously
5. Pilot implementation	Testing the new model in selected regions	Identification of practical problems and their solution	6-12 months
6. Full-scale implementation	Extension of new models to the whole country	Creation of a single effective control system	12-18 months
7. Monitoring and evaluation	Analysing the effectiveness of the new system, making adjustments	Continuous improvement of the control system	Continuously

Source: own compilation

The proposed plan for the implementation of the new administrative control model is designed to last for 3-4 years. It is important to note that this process requires constant monitoring and readiness to make adjustments based on the experience gained and changes in the external environment. The key advantages

of the proposed model are the automation of routine processes, the ability to process large amounts of data, and to identify hidden patterns and risks. Transparency is ensured by recording all actions in unchanging registers and involving the public in decision-making and monitoring (Gallyamova, 2018).

It is important to balance state supervision and local government autonomy. Administrative control should not lead to excessive centralization and should be limited to issues of legality, without interfering with the appropriateness of municipal decisions (Eckhardt, 2023; King & Altmann, 2022). Further research should be directed to detailing the models of individual components, piloting relevant solutions, and analyzing the best international practices of using intelligent technologies in supervisory activities (Serohin, et al., 2024). The development and implementation of an innovative model of administrative control over the legality of local government decisions using artificial intelligence will require the joint efforts of government agencies, the expert community, civil society and Ukraine's international partners. Such efforts are necessary to strengthen the stability and controllability of the state in the context of ongoing military aggression.

Discussion

Based on the analysis, a number of key problems in the system of administrative control over the activities of local self-government bodies in Ukraine have been identified and recommendations for their solution have been developed (Table 3).

Table 3

Key problems and recommendations for improving the administrative control system in Ukraine

Problem	Recommendation
Excessive interference in the autonomy of local self-government bodies	Introduction of the institute of prefects with clearly defined powers
Insufficient transparency of control procedures	Creation of a unified electronic system for monitoring decisions of local government
Weakness of public control mechanisms	Implementation of mandatory electronic consultations with the public
Low efficiency of internal control in local government	Development of the internal audit system according to international standards
Absence of a unified system for evaluating the effectiveness of control	Development of analytical tools for evaluating the effectiveness of supervisory activities

Source: own compilation

The proposed recommendations are aimed at comprehensively addressing the identified problems and creating a balanced administrative control system that would ensure effective supervision of the legality of local self-government while preserving their autonomy.

The results of the analysis of legislation, expert interviews, and the study of foreign experience show that the current model of supervision is not effective enough and does not meet the challenges of decentralization and martial law (Lukerya, 2023; Decentralization, 2023). A survey of local government representatives showed that the majority of them consider it necessary to significantly revise the system of administrative control. Among the main shortcomings are excessive interference of state administrations in the sphere of communities' own powers, risks of bias and formalism in assessing municipal decisions for legality (Council of Europe, 2023). These problems are largely due to the unclear legal regulation of supervisory procedures and the lack of effective mechanisms for appealing the actions of supervisory authorities. In the context of external aggression, there is an urgent need to strengthen administrative control in order to respond promptly to threats to national security (Serohin, et al., 2024). The study revealed a tendency to expand the powers of military administrations to review local government acts. However, these innovations should be accompanied by clear legal safeguards against excessive interference with local autonomy (Eckhardt, 2023). A promising direction of transformation of the national model of administrative control is the introduction of the prefects' institution (King & Altmann, 2022). This will allow to separate the functions of law enforcement and executive powers, increase professionalism and depoliticize the control process. At the same time, the effectiveness of prefectures depends on a clear legislative definition of their status, powers, and procedures.

An analysis of foreign experience has shown that European countries use various models of supervision over the legality of municipal decisions (Gallyamova, 2018). The common features include adherence to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality of intervention, ensuring the right of local authorities to judicial protection, and the development of a system for assessing the quality of municipal services.

The model of administrative control substantiated in the study involves a combination of state supervision, internal audit, and public monitoring with the widespread use of intelligent technologies (Henman, 2020). This will automate routine procedures, ensure transparency and efficiency of control, and identify potential threats at an early stage.

Implementation of the proposed model faces a number of challenges, including the need for legislative support, effective interagency coordination, and training of qualified personnel (Abramov et al., 2016; Dmitriev, et al., 2020). In addition, there is still a lack of reliable empirical data on the effectiveness of different control models in the context of military threats.

Further research should focus on finding an optimal balance between the values of security, legality and local democracy, developing a methodology for assessing the effectiveness of supervisory mechanisms, and studying the ethical and legal limitations of the use of intelligent technologies in the field of power relations (Eaton & Schakel, 2022).

Despite these problems, technological modernization of the administrative control system is a promising response to the challenges of the digital age. Implementation of the proposed innovations can become a factor in improving the quality of municipal governance, strengthening trust between the state and local self-government, and combating corruption in the context of a “hybrid” war (Yakhina, et al., 2015).

To summarize, this study contributes to the development of the theory of public administration and administrative law by proposing innovative approaches to modernizing administrative control over the legality of municipal decisions, taking into account the current challenges and opportunities of intelligent technologies.

Conclusion

The conducted research substantiates the necessity for systematic transformation of administrative control over local self-government decisions in Ukraine, specifically addressing the challenges of martial law and future post-war reconstruction. The analysis of European administrative practices, particularly the French prefectural model, Polish mixed oversight system, and Swedish public control mechanisms, provides valuable insights for developing an adapted control system for Ukraine. The study reveals systemic deficiencies in the current administrative control framework, including insufficient transparency of control procedures, weak public monitoring mechanisms, and limited technological integration. The scientific novelty of the research lies in developing a conceptual model for transforming the administrative control system under martial law conditions. This model integrates security imperatives with democratic governance principles while preserving local autonomy. The study proposes innovative approaches to combining traditional administrative oversight with intelligent technologies, establishing a multi-level control framework adapted to crisis conditions. The research introduces new methodological approaches to assessing the effectiveness of administrative control in the context of military threats and post-war reconstruction.

Based on the research findings, specific recommendations for implementation include: amendments to the Law of Ukraine on Local Self-Government establishing clear oversight criteria under martial law; creation of a unified electronic register for local government decisions with blockchain verification capabilities; implementation of artificial intelligence systems for preliminary legality assessment; establishment of regional prefectural offices with standardized control procedures; and development of public monitoring platforms integrated with state oversight systems (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1997).

The implementation strategy encompasses creating emergency response mechanisms in the administrative control system, establishing specialized units for monitoring security-sensitive decisions, developing automated compliance verification systems, and implementing cross-border cooperation mechanisms with EU administrative bodies. The research proposes enhancing control effectiveness through automated verification procedures, real-time monitoring systems, and integrated databases for decision tracking. For practical application, the study recommends implementing a unified electronic system for administrative control, incorporating blockchain technology for decision verification, artificial intelligence for risk assessment, and automated compliance monitoring. The system should include specialized modules for security-sensitive decisions, public monitoring interfaces, and integration with European administrative databases.

The proposed control mechanisms require developing standardized procedures for decision verification, establishing multi-level oversight systems with clear delimitation of powers, and implementing automated monitoring processes with defined control parameters. Specific measures include creating specialized training programs for control bodies, establishing certification systems for local government officials, and developing methodological guidelines for administrative control procedures. Future research directions should examine reform effectiveness in post-conflict conditions, analyse technological impacts on governance resilience, and study the effects of administrative control transformations in the context of European integration. The development of risk assessment models for crisis conditions and analysis of post-conflict institutional reconstruction practices requires particular scholarly attention. The proposed transformations in administrative control mechanisms contribute to strengthening local governance through enhanced oversight capabilities, balanced centralization, and technological modernization. Key outcomes include improved transparency of decision-making processes, strengthened accountability mechanisms, enhanced security measures in administrative control, and closer alignment with European governance standards. This systematic approach ensures effective governance during post-war reconstruction while facilitating European integration processes.

Acknowledgement

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or non-profit sectors. The study was conducted as part of the authors' academic responsibilities. The authors would like to express their gratitude to local government representatives, experts, and citizens who participated in interviews and surveys, contributing their time and ideas to this research. We also extend our thanks to our colleagues for their valuable feedback and support throughout the study. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of affiliated institutions.

Conflict of Interest. None.

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