

1. THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY

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The significance and impact of the ENP on the implementation of the PA system reforms in the Eastern Partnership countries cannot be overestimated. Considering the prospects for the further development of the reform program as a key condition for supporting integration processes in countries that have signed the Association Agreement with the European Union, the following should be noted:

1. A positive solution to the problem of reforming the PA system in the target countries is possible only on the basis of in-depth and critical analysis of previous practice in this area, presented in the relevant publications. The results of this analysis should form the basis of the relevant recommendations for politicians and national governments.
2. Today, European countries are positioning themselves as social states that guarantee social security. (Wendt, 1999). The recognition of the economic potential of the community was the rationale for the paradigm, according to which the EU regulatory model can be extended to other countries. (Hyde-Price, 2006) (Haukkala, 2008). Using the prospect of integration, providing political and economic support, the EU initiated in the Eastern Partnership countries the implementation of public administration reforms in the context of the dissemination of the EU regulatory model. But the need to counter the aggression of Russia forced not only to supplement the traditional expansion strategy with an initiative to strengthen the European security and defense policy but also led to the need to review the implementation of expansion plans and reform approaches in Eastern European countries.
3. The concept of EU enlargement is based on a strategy that aims to stimulate, rather than force, neighbouring countries to reform in the absence of a membership perspective. The proposed partnership concept, as a tool for EU participation in the internal reform process, is intended to compensate for some negative external convergence factors. At the same

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time, building an effective model of the neighbourhood policy is impossible without successfully accomplishing two tasks: institutionalizing the new governance structure according to EU practice, including adapting the existing institutions of the Eastern Partnership countries, and ensuring that their economic interests are met as a result of cooperation. The possible inconsistency of these tasks should be presented in the consideration of alternative options.

Consideration of these issues will allow supporting the further development of integration processes in the east of the EU and will contribute to their practical effectiveness.

1.1. Expansion Strategy and Approaches to Reform in the Countries of Eastern Europe based on the Adoption of the EU Regulatory Model

The concept of “normative force” as the basis for EU enlargement

In the 21st century, the sphere of public administration began to undergo significant changes. This is particularly evident in the example of EU member countries and candidate countries for accession to the European Union.

The main driving force of these changes is the globalization of markets, the development of integration processes and the pluralization of the process of providing public services. To support the integration processes in the EU foreign policy, the expansion strategy paradigm is used. Its provisions define the principles and methodology for implementing public sector reforms in partner countries. Such reforms are considered as a mandatory component of preparation for EU accession.

When implementing the EU Expansion Strategy, the partner countries are offered a model of public administration, which ensures integration into European democratic institutions. At the same time, such a model must necessarily consider the national context. Only if these two conditions are met, the proposed approach will ensure the dissemination of the current practice in Europe to ensure the priority of meeting the needs and interests of citizens. (Barbe & Johansson-Nogue, 2008).

To ensure the effectiveness of the reform process, the EU proposes to use the concept of “normative force”. Its application should ensure the formation and implementation of the policy of adopting new members based on the export of European standards. This policy has been put into practice in the form of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) to form a “ring of friends” (Casier, Korosteleva & Whitman, 2013, Delcour, 2011).

When evaluating the results of the ongoing reforms in such Eastern

Partnership countries such as Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, it some discrepancy should be noted between the efforts to reform the public administration system and the results obtained. The experience of recent years shows that the concept of large-scale transformations based on the use of the experience of EU countries is not always perceived by the authorities, politicians and the public.

An analysis of the current situation showed that such a discrepancy is based on the conceptual provisions of the ENP on the spread of democratic norms and values beyond the borders of the EU. But the concept of “normative force” underlying the ENP, in contrast to the policy of expansion, does not imply compulsory membership.

It is widely recognized that the EU is a new type of international state association. But the discussion of what features and prospects for the further development of this education is still far from its completion. Accordingly, the definition of the concept of foreign policy will continue. (European Commission and High Representative, 2015). “The European Union is neither an intergovernmental civilian power using economic instruments and international diplomacy, nor a supranational military power using force and international intervention, but a normative idealistic force characterized by general principles and a willingness to ignore the notions of «state» or «international” (Haukkala, 2008).

This approach proposes to consider the EU foreign policy as a normative activity in international relations. The main argument on which the proposed concept of “normative force” is based in the position that the international role of the EU is determined not by its current policy, but by the concept of its implementation (Hyde-Price, 2006), (Haukkala, 2008). This approach suggests that the basis of the proposed reform program, which is based on the concept of „normative force”, should be a mandatory condition for the adoption of EU values and norms by the target countries. (Manners, 2006), (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier, 2002).

Also considering the existing restrictions, it should be recognized that the export of European values and norms to neighbouring countries contributes to the creation of a safe, stable and democratic neighbourhood for the EU. Of course, the most effective tool in promoting democracy is the prospect of EU membership. But for the EaP countries, participation in the EU enlargement process and the implementation of reforms based on the concept of “normative force” is reduced only to the adaptation of European norms and law. The economic preferences that may be granted to them after democratic reforms, in most cases remain only a long-term perspective.

The authors' monitoring of the impact of reforms carried out in such

Eastern Partnership countries as Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia showed that an attempt to combine national traditions of public administration with European norms led to the emergence of peculiar hybrid forms of public administration. They could be considered as some intermediate state that should end with the entry into the EU. But the proposed integration process does not imply full membership for these countries. And as the experience of Turkey shows, this process may not have its real completion. Considering the problematic nature of the geopolitical status of the Eastern Partnership countries that have territorial and political conflicts with Russia, their integration process can also last for a long time.

Thus, the optimization of the process of reforming the public administration system in the countries of Eastern Europe according to European standards, but in the absence of a real prospect of EU membership, is an urgent and yet unresolved problem.

In practice, the effectiveness of public administration reforms should be determined not only by the EU's efforts to disseminate the concept of "normative force", but also by national policies to develop European integration processes. The experience of reform and development of integration processes in the countries of the Eastern Partnership has shown that there can be no single option for all. Therefore, research related to the problems of EU integration must necessarily be conducted separately for each country. The results obtained in the form of relevant recommendations can be considered in the preparation of relevant plans and programs.

The Methodology of Empirical Analysis and Assessment of the Level of Influence of the European Neighbourhood Policy on Public Administration Reforms in Eastern European Countries

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of the ENP, the purpose of which is to promote democracy by the EU, is the subject of numerous studies of European scientists. Their relevance is due to the need to find solutions that will ensure that the practice of implementing the ENP strategy is in line with international realities in Europe and the world. But no less significant is the task of increasing the effectiveness of reforms carried out in the Eastern Partnership countries. After all, their effectiveness will ultimately prove the effectiveness of the ENP strategy.

Considering the methodology for studying the impact of reforms in public administration in countries that have signed an Association Agreement with the European Union, it is first necessary to establish how they meet European standards. The definition of such compliance is associated with

the need to analyze and consider numerous factors of influence. The task can be solved using an approach that will be based on an empirical case study, including an assessment of some qualitative and quantitative data characterizing the reform process.

According to the proposed research methodology, the ENP is considered an independent component. It determines the current state of the research object, the quality of which is the effectiveness of reforms. The real assessment of the effectiveness of reforms is a variable dependent on it. (OECD, 2017) (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier, 2002).

The provision of the empirical case study analysis and synthesis of influencing factors, which are represented by quantitative and qualitative data, will determine the trends existing in the applied reform policy. Furthermore, the established trends can be considered separately using the appropriate theoretical principles.

Currently, the ENP is being implemented in 16 countries. They are characterized by different national traditions, have their own special priorities in development and, as a result, different attitudes towards the practice of using „normative force“. But the existing differences, which are complemented by differences in the degree of development of democratic institutions and the level of economic development, do not make it possible to obtain, as a result of an empirical case study, a common for all countries assessment of the “normative” practice of the ENP.

A possible way out of this situation may be the introduction of restrictions on the case study under consideration, considering the situation that has arisen with the implementation of reforms in only three EaP countries, Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia.

The results should be evaluated, considering their consistency with existing theories that substantiate the EU Expansion Strategy and the application of the concept of “normative force“. To do this, using the results of summarizing the data characterizing the effectiveness of the reforms, it will be necessary to proceed to assessing the impact on the process of disseminating the norms of related factors. The final stage should be a theoretical justification of the results. For example, given the possible limitations, the theoretical rationale for the reform policy proposed by Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier to study the proliferation of norms in the candidate countries may, in general, be applicable to countries that have no real prospect of membership. This will allow analysing the data obtained because of empirical research based on this theory.

But it should be noted that in some cases such direct application of the provisions of the well-known theories I. Manners on the EU and the

„normative force”, Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier on the specifics of Europeanization of Eastern European countries (Manners, 2001), (Manners, 2006), (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004) may face a number of problematic issues that limit their use. A possible way out of this situation, after identifying the existing constraints, will be a proposal for the development of existing theories, which should make it possible to substantiate the implementation of reforms based on the concept of „normative force”. Thus, the proposed research methodology should provide the necessary understanding of such a complex social process as reforming the public administration sector in the EaP countries, provided that there is no prospect of their membership in the EU.

European Neighborhood Policy as a Mechanism for Reform in Eastern Europe

As is known, the proposal on the ENP was based on the same principle as the EU Enlargement Strategy, it „is the result of a combination and study of policy and adaptation from the experience of expansion to the changed environment after expansion” (Korosteleva, 2012), (Korosteleva, 2013).

The range of tasks that should have been solved through the use of the ENP includes the dissemination of democratic norms and ensuring the formation of new governance mechanisms based on European norms and incentives. But the experience of the implementation of the ENP in Ukraine has shown that the potential effectiveness of solving the tasks set is deliberately limited by the very concept of the ENP. Unlike the Expansion Strategy, the ENP does not imply preparation for membership (Gromadzki G., 2015). As a result, the need for a significant amount of costs for participation in the ENP, but without the possibility of EU membership, leads to a low motivation of national governments. Given this situation, a possible alternative was the proposal to build „privileged relations” with the EaP countries. For this, the Association Agreement with the European Union has been complemented by a package of economic preferences. They were supposed to provide these countries with access to the EU internal market, receiving financial assistance for reforms and institutional changes. To a certain extent, such a proposal should have compensated for the lack of membership prospects.

But in the real practice of carrying out reforms in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, the lack of membership prospects has led to the fact that the reforms were half-hearted, and the management reform process in the Eastern Partnership countries has not been completed. In fact, the current state of the countries that have signed the Association Agreement with the European Union should be considered only as an intermediate step.

The basic condition for cooperation for the EaP countries is the process of democratization of society based on the adoption of democratic institutions of the EU. In the study, for further consideration and conceptualization of the concept of „democracy” in the context of the study of the effectiveness of reforms in the field of public administration, it is proposed to use its minimalist and maximalist definitions (Mearsheimer, 2006).

According to the minimalist definition, democracy is «a procedural system focused on the institutionalization of politics through free and fair elections». By maximalist definition, democracy is «a system of political institutions and procedures and is based on free and fair elections, but is also a system of rights and freedoms».

In essence, the minimalist definition suggests considering electoral (electoral), and a maximalist definition of liberal democracies. Supporters of the minimalist definition of democracy as an example of electoral democracies suggest considering the formation of democratic institutions in EU member states.

However, the maximalist definition, which places emphasis on free and fair elections, offers a deliberately limited consideration of the concept of democracy. It is known from the practice of the countries that have signed the Association Agreement with the European Union that they really ensure the possibility of free and fair elections. But the follow-up of state institutions may have undemocratic features of governance and even include cases of human rights violations. In essence, such states are transformed into so-called «hybrid regimes», in which the democratization of society, the democratization of society and the declaration of priorities for democratic governance are combined with a high level of corruption. (Dabrowski, 2014), (Delcour, 2015a).

To consider the existing ambiguity, when studying the reform process in the field of public administration in the EaP countries, it is possible to use an approach that will be based on the so-called model polyarchy (or the rule of many). It can be based on the use of a limited number of indicators characterizing the public administration system. Their list may include the possibility of electing officials, universal free and fair suffrage, the opportunity for citizens to run for office, freedom of expression and the possibility of obtaining alternative information.

Thus, the first task that should have been solved in the implementation of the concept of „normative force” in the EaP countries should be the adoption of democratic institutions on the basis of ensuring free and fair elections. It can be argued that in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia this task was successfully solved. This allows them to proceed to the next stage of reforms, which include the extension of democratic norms and EU

institutions to the sphere of public administration.

With this approach, the implementation process of the ENP can be described by the so-called development paradigm, and the democratization itself can be observed as a process of different phases. (Emerson & Noutcheva, 2004).

Daniel Silander, relying on the Rustov model, proposes to distinguish three phases of democratization (and essentially reforms): the pre-transition phase, the transition phase, and the consolidation phase.

Using this approach to study the implementation process of the ENP in the Eastern Partnership countries (Georgia and Moldova) and to summarize the experience of reforms in Ukraine, the study suggests identifying possible phases of democratization as follows:

- the pre-transition phase, when the processes of social and economic liberalization, openness and pluralism begin in a non-democratic society. The society and the authorities accept the proposal from the EU to extend to it the concept of “normative force”. The basis for the transition to the next phase is usually the signing of an Association Agreement with the European Union and a plan for the implementation of its provisions.
- the transition phase in which reforms are underway to transition to electoral democracy based on the concept of “normative force”;
- the consolidation phase, which is the last phase of the formation of democratic institutions, allowing completing the process of integration into the democratic European community and starting a dialogue on joining the EU.

Assessing the European integration experience of a number of countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the EU, it should be noted that the concept of democratic consolidation was rather vague for them. The degree of democratization of society and the effectiveness of reforms in these countries were and remain different. This makes it possible to make a reasonable conclusion that confirmation of the completion of the consolidation phase should be based not only on the achievement of relevant indicators, but also on the priorities of the current policies of national governments and EU leaders. (Delcour L. 2015b).

During the implementation of the second and third phases, a number of internal and external factors influence program activities. The degree of their influence is determined by the level of their acceptance of regulatory identity with the EU.

The list of internal factors influencing the processes of democratization and Europeanization in the EaP countries is given in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Internal factors determining the process of democratization and Europeanization of the Eastern Partnership countries

№	Factor	Comment
1	socio-economic	Represents the social and economic factors that are critical to the completion of a democratization program.
2	cultural	A set of factors, including political culture, religion and civil society, the presence of which will be conducive to the democratization process.
3	political	Represents the condition that democratization should be based on already existing institutional traditions.
4	diffusion (distribution) of democracy	Diffusion of democracy can be conceptualized as a process by which people and the society of a target country are influenced by the context of “normative power”. A prerequisite for this is the adoption of European norms and values.
5	democracy promotion	The possibility of successful completion of democratization processes is considered subject to the implementation of a joint pro-democracy policy of the authorities and external forces.

Commenting on Table 1.1, it should be noted that the variety of possible factors of influence requires the use of separate techniques for their analysis. To study each of the factors, it is necessary to use the appropriate tools and theories that cannot be generalized on the basis of a single, integral theory of the democratization process. (Gstöhl, 2015).

Summarizing the above, it is possible to come to a reasonable conclusion that such a scientific problem as evaluating the effectiveness and forecasting the process of promoting democracy in the countries of the «hybrid regime» has not yet received its solution. Turning from the general formulation of the task of studying the nature and effectiveness of democracy promotion to the study of the current practice of the ENP to promote democratic institutions in countries that have signed the Association Agreement with the European Union, the following should be noted.

The use of the concept of “normative power” suggests that the main indicator of success can only be the ultimate effectiveness of promoting democratic institutions. Taking such an approach as a basis, a number of researchers have proposed several models of the regulatory integration process in the EU. (Kelley, 2006), (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004):

- “model of external incentives”, which is based on the logic of causation and has the dynamics of political causation;

- “social learning model” that follows the logic of relevance and emphasizes the identification of the target country with the EU and its decision on the adoption of EU standards;
- “Lesson-Drawing model”, which is based on the adoption of EU norms and rules without entering the ENP program field.

To conduct a comparative analysis of these models and determine the possibility of their use in assessing the effectiveness of the democratization process, the study suggests using such a criterion as the possibility of their practical use for analysing the reform process in the field of public administration in Ukraine, R. Moldova, and Georgia.

“The External Stimulus Model”

“The model of external incentives” is a model of a rationalistic type and is aimed at studying the essence of political conditionality. This model recognizes that the main factors of influence are the participants of the process themselves. In the process of communication, they exchange information, offers and promises according to their preferences and the condition of disseminating the concept of „normative force”. On the EU side, the communication process should be based on a strategy of political conditionality, followed by “reinforcement of remuneration”. In practice, this means that the EU must offer conditions for the adoption of its rules and regulations to other countries. Such conditions must necessarily include appropriate remuneration and resources for their implementation. Within the framework of the implementation of this model, the EU, national governments of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia offer such types of remuneration:

- international technical and financial assistance;
- institutional links, which include the Agreement on Trade and Cooperation, the Association Agreement with the EU and the possibility of extending European standards to entire industries, with the result that national authorities are beginning to come under the jurisdiction of European institutions;
- the prospect of obtaining economic benefits as a result of admission to EU markets.
- An indispensable condition for the effectiveness of the communication process is the internal balance between proposals and promises. It should reflect the current distribution of preferences put forward by both the EU and the target countries. For this, conditions on the part of the EU can be formalized on the basis of:

- the possibility of expanding the provisions of the Association Agreement with the European Union. This will provide a situation where the benefits of the promised EU remuneration will be greater than the internal costs of implementing the rules, necessarily including the non-received benefits of not cooperating with other countries whose conditions contradict the norms;
- differential empowerment of national actors through indirect division or empowerment. Under this condition, they receive independent incentives for adopting EU rules. In practice, this is manifested in the case when domestic subjects, by adopting EU rules in their field of activity, increase their influence in the political system, which they could not do before due to the lack of sufficient power.

Thus, the main condition for adopting a model of external incentives, which will be supported by the practice of additional remuneration, is the excess of the benefits from the received remuneration over the internal costs of implementing European norms.

An example of using the model of external incentives is the signing of the Association Agreement with the European Union by Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia Association Agreement with the European Union. The «Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas» application (DCFTA) is an additional reward that provides the opportunity to benefit. DCFTA opens up access for Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine to the EU internal market in certain sectors and gives EU investors in these sectors the same regulatory environment in the associated country as in the EU.

But in reality, the prospect of obtaining and using such a benefit is accompanied not only by the demand for reform but also by the numerous conditions and restrictions in the form of quotas or certification. As a result, the gain is postponed for an indefinite future.

This conclusion is confirmed by the results of monitoring the implementation of the countries of the Eastern Partnership Association Agreement with the European Union. At the level of the second phase, their current costs significantly exceed the benefits received. (Natorski M., 2016).

To assess the potential level and the possibility of obtaining benefits for Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia from the implementation of the Association Agreement with the European Union, it is necessary to determine the difference between the costs and the results obtained. The study found that this difference depends on the influence of four influencing factors: the specification of conditions, the size and speed of

remuneration, the reliability of threats and promises, and the size of the cost of implementing the rules.

1. Concretization of conditions

The decision on the adoption of EU norms and rules by the national government depends on the conditions for remuneration on the part of the EU and on how they are determined by national specifics and established management practices.

2. The size and rate of reward

This factor assumes that the development of the implementation process of the norms and rules is related to the size and speed of remuneration. In this case, of course, the promise of participation in the expansion will be more convincing than the promise of assistance. An important condition is also the desire to reduce implementation time and early reward.

3. Trust in conditions and promises

These factors imply unconditional confidence in the implementation process of the Association Agreement with the European Union proposed by the EU. For this, the EU must argue its position, including the conditions for retaining remuneration in case of non-compliance or promising to provide it with successful implementation of the rules and acceptance of the rules. Based on this reasoning, the assistance and the Association with the European Union will be more real than the accession, since expansion is costly for the EU, including long-term negotiations and preparation.

4. The cost of adopting the rules

The “external incentive model” suggests that the adoption of rules and regulations is always costly for national governments. In this case, the decision logic should be that the costs of adoption will be balanced, considering the benefits provided by EU remuneration.

Based on these four factors, Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier formulated the following hypothesis: «the condition will be most effective if the rules and conditions are defined; contingent fees are determined, high and paid quickly; credible threats of withholding remuneration; adoption costs are low; and few players veto» (Schimmelfennig Frank, Sedelmeier Ulrich, 2004).

Considering the possibility of using the «Model of external incentives» to analyze the reform process in Ukraine, it is easy to see that:

- the existing conditions for the implementation of reforms in the field of public administration, given the significant component of individual sectors, do not have clear wording and change

- depending on current conditions;
- the prospect of integration into the European market is largely retained only by a theoretical perspective;
 - there is a practice of abandonment of separate, previously adopted decisions, both by the EU and the national government. As a result, reforms have not acquired signs of a systemic process.

Continuing consideration of the possibility of practical use of the “External incentive model” for analysing the reform process in the EaP countries, it should also be noted such a significant drawback as the inability to explain internal changes in individual countries. But without such explanations, it is impossible to substantiate the results of the calculation of benefits and costs. The possibility of preparing objective forecasts is limited. Part of this shortcoming is not in the alternative models, which will be discussed below.

“The Social Learning Model”

“The social learning model is based on the logic of relevance. From this point of view, the strategy of integration proposed by the EU is determined by the presence of a specific collective identity with the target country, including a set of common norms and values” (Manners I., 2008). The model assumes that the country will adopt EU norms and rules depending on how much it identifies itself with them. Identification criteria are:

- the legitimacy that characterizes the quality of the rules and regulations, as well as the process by which they were established, including the way in which they are passed on to targeted governments;
- identity, which determines the degree of identification of the target government with the collective identity, norms, and values of the EU: the higher the level of identification, the higher the likelihood of the adoption of the rules;
- resonance, which implies the coincidence of internal factors with the norms and rules of the EU, which contributes to their adoption in the target country.

Assessing the possibility of practical applicability of this model for analyzing the reform process in the countries of Eastern Europe, it should be noted that the region of its application is limited. So, for the countries of Western and Central Europe, such an identity was natural. At the same time, the EaP countries, which for a long time were behind the “iron curtain” of the Soviet Union, had practically no common norms and values with the EU. In fact, the process of introducing democratic institutions in them began only in 1990.

“The Lesson-Drawing model”

“The lesson-drawing model” implies the adoption of EU rules without any incentives from the EU. This is considered the “ideal type” of Europeanization. The idea is that governments are beginning to learn from other countries the practice of overcoming internal problems. The list of conditions under which governments are forced to learn lessons from EU rules includes such cases as dissatisfaction with politics, epistemic communities oriented towards the EU, the possibility of transferring norms and rules to another institutional environment.

The countries in which this model was implemented include a number of countries in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Summing up the review, it should be noted that the «Model of external incentives» Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier offers the most realistic strategy for the EU to export its norms and values to the EaP countries. The use of this model in implementing the ENP strategy in Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia has already partially confirmed its potential effectiveness. At the same time, the restriction of the possibility of achieving a balance between proposals and promises led to the fact that the dynamics of the reform program in these countries remains relatively low. It is necessary to conduct a special analysis of internal processes, the results of which will make it possible to justify proposals for the correction of the «Model of external incentives», considering national specificities.

Strategy and Practice of Reform in the Eap Countries

Based on a comparative analysis of well-known methods of supporting the export of EU norms and values to a target country, in order to increase the efficiency of this process, it is proposed to base the methodology of conducting reforms and promoting democratic institutions to consistently implement two basic models: «Models of external incentives» and «Models of social learning».

The basis for this proposal is the data presented in the reports of governments on the development of the implementation of EU norms and rules within the framework of the Association Agreement with the European Union. Their analysis allows us to come to a reasonable conclusion that the development of a democratic community in the target countries on the basis of European norms provides it with the ability for legitimacy and identification with respect to the EU. As a result, at a certain stage, they can switch to the «Model of social learning.»

There is a sufficient theoretical substantiation of these models. It allows establishing not only the conditions for the interaction of European and national norms and rules but also assessing how these conditions are

suitable for the successful internationalization of democratic norms. And although these two basic models imply different conditions for their application, they are fully consistent with the debate between rationalism and constructivism. However, they are not mutually exclusive, but complementary in the general context.

Evaluating the effectiveness of the reforms carried out by the example of Ukraine, it should be noted that numerous support programs and «rewards» were focused on the formation of public service institutions in accordance with European norms and law.

The proposed EU point of view on public service is based on existing democratic practices and emphasizes the accountability of officials to citizens. She suggests that government officials should be motivated to serve the public interest. Then their work will meet the expectations of citizens regarding a “healthy and responsive public service” (Osborne, 2006), (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

The study of the experience of carrying out reforms in the field of public administration in a number of countries of Central and Eastern Europe confirmed the expediency of using an approach that is based on the theory of public choice and the principle of the «main agent». According to him, in the process of carrying out reforms, government officials demand control and supervision, which limits their mercenary behavior and thereby prevents inefficiency and corruption.

At the first stage of reforms, other conditions are possible for reforming the public sector, including

- simultaneous implementation of reforms to decentralize the management system, wages and employment
- reforms of honesty and the fight against corruption
- «bottom-up» reforms aimed at increasing the efficiency of government institutions and organizations. (Kostanyan H. and S. Meister (2016), (Freyburg T., S. Lavenex, F. Schimmelfennig, T. Skripka and A. Wetzel (2015):

The experience in defining the conditions for carrying out reforms for the countries of Central Europe were summarized, and can also find its place in carrying out reforms in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia and solving the task of reforming the state apparatus on the condition of compliance with EU standards.

1.2. The Concept of Partnership as an Instrument for EU Participation in the Process of Internal Reforms and Adaptation of the Institutions of the Eastern Partnership Countries

EU Enlargement Strategy as a Concept of Partnership in the Process of Internal Reforms of Eap Countries

In order to study the strategy of spreading EU norms and promoting democratic institutions in their work, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier in Central and Eastern Europe (2002) proposed to use the “Europeanization paradigm”. According to this theory, the spread of democratic institutions of the EU is proposed to be based on the process of Europeanization, which should ensure the spread of democratic institutions on the basis of regulatory empowerment of EU institutions in the target countries. But such an approach will be possible provided that democracy and Europeanization are overlapping categories.

Since the concept of «Europeanization» represents a broader concept (Cornea, 2016), then when considering the «paradigm of Europeanization», it is necessary first to define the concept and essence of this very concept. (Delcour, 2015), (Gstöhl, 2016a).

As an integration concept, Europeanization is the subject of much discussion. On the one hand, it is proposed to be understood as a process of “influencing the results of policies and institutions at the European level on national policies” (Delcour L., 2015b). On the other hand, Europeanization can also be defined as the process of converging European norms and values through the interaction of three dynamics (Ghazaryan N., 2014):

- EU legally binding norms for democracy and human rights;
- transformation of objective interests and individuals;
- transformation of values and identities at the social level.

Representing Europeanization in the form of a process, it is conditionally possible to distinguish three phases of its implementation, which will characterize the achieved levels of Europeanization and the potential influence of the EU on such criteria as:

- participation in the Europeanization process: the level of influence of EU institutions on EU member states;
- the expansion of Europeanization: the impact of EU institutions on the accession process of candidate countries;
- development of neighbourhood with target countries that do not have a clear prospect for their accession: limiting the level of influence by economic incentives.

Considering these phases of Europeanization in relation to the EaP countries, the study proposes to focus on two interrelated concepts: the Europeanization of the neighbourhood and the Europeanization resulting from it. So, Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier define Europeanization as a process in which states adopt EU rules (Schimmelfennig Frank and Sedelmeier Ulrich, 2002).

The comparative analysis of the basic models of Europeanization carried out in the study made it possible to substantiate the use of the proposal, according to which non-EU countries will adopt EU norms and rules: first, the development of processes according to the «External stimulus model», and then, at a certain stage, the transition to “social learning models”.

Considering the existing EU enlargement strategy as a component of the «paradigm of Europeanization», it is necessary to highlight such a mandatory condition as the EU partnership with the target country when initiating and implementing internal reforms in it. Such an approach is a prerequisite for the implementation of the concept of „normative force” (Haukkala, 2016), (Larsen, 2014).

An analysis of the organization of a partnership based on the example of Ukraine in the planning of the reform of the public administration sector showed its potential effectiveness.

Evaluating the practice of carrying out reforms in Ukraine, one can single out some characteristic features of the process of implementing the «paradigm of Europeanization» in the target country:

- the simultaneous existence of two processes: the EU-oriented integration process and the internal process of adopting European norms;
- the presence of two types of decision logic at the same time: “logic of consequences”, which assumes that the national government's action strategy is a priori rational and focused on expanding its own power and increasing well-being and “logic of relevance”, according to which all participants in the reform process are motivated by common internal identities, values and norms.

Given the specific contradiction of these two types of logic, participants in the reform process should proceed from their possible alternative, combining the condition of accepting norms with the possibility of obtaining preferences. In this formulation, these two types of logic will correspond to the well-known discussion between rationalism and constructivism in the theory of Europeanization.

European Neighbourhood Policy

By proposing the ENP in 2004, the EU sought to create around itself a «ring of friendly states». These countries will be managed, have a stable and prosperous economy, including the prospect of integration into a single community (Casier, Korosteleva and Whitman, 2013).

Despite certain limitations of the ENP, such a task as ensuring the European integration orientation of the future development of Georgia, R. Moldova and Ukraine was successfully accomplished. Their support from the EU was embodied in the form of an Association Agreement with the European Union, the granting of a visa-free regime and the creation of a DCFTA free trade zone. Currently, for these countries, an alternative to the European choice no longer exists.

At the same time, considering the final results of many years of active policy on the implementation of the ENP, which combined the concept of «regulatory force» with significant financial support to neighboring countries, it should be noted that the «rings of friendly states» were not created. Moreover, the level of conflict, the number of regional problems and challenges has increased significantly in some EaP countries and the Southern Partnership.

The problem of countering aggression on the part of Russia has acquired particular urgency.

The current situation led to the start of discussion in 2015 on the possible modernization of the ENP program provisions. The EU's consultations with interested parties should have ensured the preparation of a package of proposals for reforming the neighbourhood policy, bringing its program priorities in line with the existing realities.

Unfortunately, this preserved the approach that was already used in 2004 and showed its limitations. Only EU experts and politicians take part in the process of defining the policy provisions and priorities of the ENP. (European Commission, 2008, European Commission, 2015).

As a result, already at the discussion stage, the future reform of the ENP is constrained by its effectiveness, when the most pressing problems and requests of the target country are not considered. In fact, all countries belonging to the target territory of the ENP should adopt a single, common to all cooperation option, without considering national characteristics, the real political situation, the level of democratic institutions and problems in their economic development.

Considering the ENP in the context of the experience gained in carrying out reforms in the sphere of public administration in such EaP countries as

Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, the following two key points should be noted:

- to discuss the issue of the further implementation of the EU enlargement strategy based on partnership, including the task of internal reforms of the EaP countries, all participants of the European integration program should be involved. At the same time, the priority position of the policy of cooperation should be the priority of European values, with the unequivocal projection of the EU regulatory model on reforms in public administration in the EaP countries. Questions to support the ongoing reforms must be resolved to consider national circumstances, the achieved level of social and economic development;
- reforms in the EaP countries are predominant. The role of the EU in solving these problems is difficult to overestimate. But for this, in addition to the direct involvement of European institutions, further differentiation of individual support programs with added tools that will adapt to the specific problems of each of their countries is necessary. Currently, a generalized partnership format is offered for all participants.
- The EU proposes quite a lot of diverse technical assistance programs, the purpose of which is to support reform policies in all spheres. At the same time, at numerous conferences, seminars and meetings, the issue of insufficient final effectiveness of already implemented support projects is constantly raised. Various options are offered, as the situation can be changed. Unfortunately, the general principles of solving the problem of ensuring the effectiveness of the ENP program activities have not yet been developed. The monitoring of the projection process of the EU regulatory model on the reform of state institutions of the EaP countries confirms the existence of numerous problems that need to be solved.

Since the last enlargement, the EU has significantly strengthened its position on the Eastern borders. A special place in this process is taken by the EaP initiative, which is called upon to practically ensure the development of the policy of expansion to the east of Europe (Korosteleva, 2012), (Korosteleva, 2013). However, the numerous problems existing at the geopolitical and regional levels significantly limit the potential of the EU to further implement the expansion strategy. To solve them, it is first necessary to define the concept and formulate the provisions of a fundamentally new policy with respect to the EaP countries. Its current regulations should include not only the definition of the EU as a regulatory body for these countries, on the assumption that they recognize the

normative model of the community. This is already there. First of all, it is necessary to involve these countries in the very process of forming a new policy, taking into account the national peculiarities of each country and its historical priorities. And of course, it is necessary to envisage actions aimed at countering the aggression of Russia. Formation of the defense component has become a mandatory component of any regional cooperation policy.

But the solution of the task of developing and justifying approaches to the modernization of the ENP, improving the effectiveness of program activities cannot be obtained without defining the theoretical principles of EU enlargement that will consider the existing realities. The relevant theory should clearly show the possibilities by which the EU, as a regulatory authority, can influence the development of the EaP countries, resulting in the formation of a «ring of friends».

The approach existing up to 2015 proceeded from the fact that in order to implement the concept of „normative force” and achieve the set objectives, it would be sufficient to use the practice of «soft power». It will be enough to ensure the strengthening of the position of the EU and the further development of Euro-integration processes in the EaP countries (Wendt A., 1999, Barbe E. and Johansson-Nogues E., 2008). But the need to intensify actions to counteract the ENP from Russia led to the need to revise this concept. The actual task was the transition to the practice of «hard power», which should include a mandatory component to ensure safety.

The transition to the practice of „hard power” leads to the need to revise certain provisions of the existing theoretical substantiation of the ENP and the concept of European integration for the EaP countries. This approach has already received its formal definition at the summit in Riga in 2017.

When the EU was established in November 1993, researchers proposed a number of theories substantiating the general principles and practices of European expansion. But the study of the problems of the development of European integration processes continues to be the subject of numerous theoretical studies. They are designed to show not only further directions for the practice of expanding and deepening the processes of European integration, but also to determine the most rational approaches to EU enlargement.

The peculiarity of the further development of the theoretical base of the processes of European integration should be the transition from considering only intra-European processes to a global context. The corresponding theory of the implementation of the concept of “normative power” must proceed from the fact that, in addition to the EU, the countries of the Southern and Eastern Partnerships are also influenced by

other external factors. Consideration of these factors should be a mandatory component in determining:

- the general principles of theoretical substantiation of the ENP concept;
- the range of tasks that should be solved by such a theory of the implementation of the concept of «normative power» based on the practice of «hard power»;
- the establishing of a connection between theoretical positions and specific tasks that will be solved in the process of implementing the ENP program activities.

1.3. Problems and Practice of Reforming the System of Public Administration in Eastern Europe

EU Regulatory Practices in Public Administration Reform in Eastern European Countries

At the core of public administration reforms in Eastern European countries lies the concept of “normative power”, according to which the target countries (countries covered by the ENP) should apply the rules of governance and EU law on their territory. According to Manners (2006), the international norm in EU practice is defined as a way of expressing what is considered as “normal” in international relations. Therefore, the concept of “normative power” is proposed to be considered as an opportunity to form or change what can be considered as normal in a specific context.

The institutional environment of the EU is based on a broad regulatory framework that has evolved over the past fifty years through a series of declarations, contracts, policies and conditions. Accordingly, Manners (2006) proposes to consider five basic norms that have become institutionalized from the very beginning of the integration process:

- peace (in key declarations such as the European Coal Treaty and Steel 1951, TEC 1957);
- freedom (TEC and DFE 1991);
- democracy;
- the rule of law and respect for human rights (contained in the preamble and fundamental principles of the TEU, article 11 TEU, article 177 TEC);
- membership criteria adopted at the European Council in Copenhagen in 1993.

In addition to the five basic norms listed above, Manners also highlights

four related norms: social solidarity, equality, sustainable development, and good governance.

Of course, normative values adopted in the EU are not unique or specific only for the EU member states. The listed norms represent the general principles of European and international law. In essence, they are universal.

Their position as a basis for EU foreign policy in the early 1990s and the practice of subsequent application made it possible to formulate the main legal, political and moral values, the adoption of which determines European identity. This allows you to determine on their basis the principles of foreign policy and the conditions for the implementation of the Expansion Strategy (Lavenex S. and F. Schimmelfennig, 2013).

Manners (2006) distinguishes between six factors based on which EU diffusion is ensured:

1. Contagion, which reflects the unintended nature of the spread of EU norms, is called a symbolic normative power;
2. information diffusion, which characterizes information dissemination and represents the process of strategic and declarative communication on the part of the EU;
3. procedural diffusion, the procedural distribution of which represents the institutionalization of EU relations with third parties, such as agreements, interregional cooperation or EU membership;
4. transfer diffusion is the exchange of benefits (goods, trade, aid) from the EU and third parties or the so-called stick and carrot policy, including financial rewards or economic benefits in exchange for adopting community norms and standards;
5. exceptional diffusion is the physical presence of the EU in third states or international organizations, such as commissions and embassies of member states;
6. Cultural diffusion represents cultural distribution and political learning in third states and organizations; this construction of knowledge and social and political identity by subjects of regulatory diffusion.

The listed factors determining the diffusion of the EU can be considered as criteria for analysing the effectiveness of the ENP in the EaP countries. Their use will make it possible to assess how the EU disseminates its values through policy, while placing an emphasis on the actual regulatory impact it has.

Evaluation, Monitoring of Effectiveness and Priorities in the Development of the Reform Process in the EaP Countries

Since the 1980s and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, systemic public administration reforms have been carried out in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe. As a result, states such as Poland, the Baltic countries, Slovakia, Slovenia and Croatia received a significant boost in their economic and social development. In terms of social standards and economic indicators, they occupy a decent position among the EU countries.

Since 2009, the EU has actively promoted reform policies in EaP countries such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine within the framework of the ENP. For Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, the base document on which the reforms are based is the Association Agreement with the European Union. For their part, having signed the Association Agreement with the European Union, these countries have pledged to implement institutional and legal reforms.

However, in practical implementation of the provisions of the Association Agreement with the European Union in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, these countries face numerous problems that limit or hinder its implementation. The economic crisis, the lack of financial, technical and human resources, the lack of the institutional and legal environment necessary for the implementation of the reform policy do not allow obtaining results that confirm the advantages of the Association Agreement with the European Union (State Cancellery, 2018; NIO, 2015; Justice.Md, 2016).

Problems of implementation of European norms and law in carrying out reforms were in countries that have already become members of the EU. However, the conditions that accompanied this process were completely different. Therefore, an assessment of the current public sector reform process in the EaP countries should be carried out in a separate context that takes into account their national circumstances.

The ENP, in the framework of the policy of supporting reforms in the EaP countries, is supporting the national governments of Ukraine, R. Moldova and Georgia in carrying out the necessary structural reforms. The general principles and methodology of the public administration reform were developed by SIGMA together with the European Commission. Since 2014, the European Commission has identified six priority areas for reform¹:

- policy development and coordination

¹ <http://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/principles-public-administration.htm>

- civil service and personnel management
- accountability
- provision of services
- public finance management.

Although common management criteria are universal for all EU countries, SIGMA has developed more adapted principles for EU candidate countries and more general principles oriented to reform in countries that cooperate with the EU within the framework of the ENP (ENP).

Summarizing the experience of carrying out reforms in countries that occupy the first positions on the dynamics of development in the EU, it should be noted that for them the implementation of reforms began with the reform of the government itself.

Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, having signed the Association Agreement with the European Union, immediately launched reforms in the field of public administration. In Ukraine, in 2016, the Cabinet of Ministers developed and approved the "Strategy for Reforming the State Administration of Ukraine for 2016–2020" (NIO, 2015).

The strategy includes four classic areas of public administration reform: civil service reform, reform of the Cabinet of Ministers and central executive bodies (ministries, services, agencies and inspectorates), reform of the provision of administrative services and management reform of public (public) finances. In accordance with the concept of "normative force" discussed above, the EU not only provides expert support for the reform, but also signed an agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the European Commission on financing the program "Support for the comprehensive reform of public administration in Ukraine" totaling € 104 million.

Assessing the effectiveness of the use of allocated funds, first of all it should be noted that the EU is experiencing some difficulties with spending money. In general, countries fulfil the conditions of financial tranches: Moldova ranks first (almost 100%), Georgia (90%) and Armenia (85%) are closed, and Ukraine (60-70%) and Azerbaijan (50%) are at the end of the line. However, the fact of using the allocated funds does not mean the progress of reforms.

In practice, the normative practice of the ENP is not always balanced with the proposed financial means. An example would be the Ukrainian energy sector, which needs a billion euros to reform in accordance with the requirements of the European Energy Package. Nevertheless, he received relatively little funding. At the same time, Georgia was proposed to decentralize the system of regional governance, which was not included in

the plans of the government.

Many reform proposals suggest significant national co-financing, which EaP countries cannot provide. For example, for countries such as Moldova, Georgia and Armenia, EU assistance amounts to up to 5 percent of annual national budgets. In the case of Ukraine, EU funds account for only 0.1% of the national budget. It should also be noted that the EU does not pay enough attention to the actual process of implementing the reforms and their effectiveness. As a result, the ability to control spending in EaP countries is limited by the lack of effective monitoring mechanisms both in civil society and in government. EU advisory support is also limited.

Significance and Role of Partnership Tools in Reform

The effectiveness of public administration reform is largely determined by the compliance of the ENP policy with the political trends that have emerged in the EaP countries.

Unresolved conflict in the Donbass, democratic reforms that have stalled in Moldova and Ukraine, Georgia, which is faced with elections and polls aimed at supporting the parties prone to Russia.

Numerous problems in the democratization of society in these countries lead to the need to change the existing EU regulatory policy. The new approach should offer adequate solutions, paying particular attention to the conflict and changing political and geostrategic situation in the region. Possible EU approaches to the revision of the ENP (ENP) should focus on comparing political trends in the EaP states with the possibility of improving the neighbourhood policy itself.

Unfortunately, in the existing proposals for the reform of the ENP there is no clear streamlining of support priorities. They combine old and new provisions: good governance, democracy, the rule of law and human rights, which are essentially the traditional "basic level" of the ENP.

In this case, the EU may revise the existing support instruments based on the proposal of the EaP countries on the prospects for EU membership. The condition for such a proposal should be the fulfilment of the provisions of the Association Agreement with the European Union.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of reforms in the EaP countries showed that a significant deterrent to the implementation of EU standards is the insufficient justification of the chosen priorities. The EU's approach, which is based on the principle of "more for more" and focuses on cooperation on individual priorities, is not always effective and results in dispersion of resources. An alternative to it should be an approach based on „with lower

and higher priorities.” Its use will ensure the concentration of resources on priority areas for the country. Thus, the problem of choosing priorities in reforming the public administration sphere has not yet been resolved by the EU.

The civil society organizations of the EaP countries can make a significant contribution to the implementation of reforms. To this end, joint programming of reform policies with the participation of representatives of the EU, EaP countries and the civil society network should become an established practice. Thanks to the implementation of technical assistance programs in the EaP countries, civil society in them not only acquired a new quality, but also formed the necessary potential to support democracy in the region. Using the tools of the ENP for the further development and support of new forms of civil society, it is necessary to take into account the fragmentation that has begun in the EaP countries. For this, the EU should take a balanced approach, taking into account the existing spectrum of civil society organizations in the country. This will ensure the development of democratic institutions necessary for the implementation of reform policies.

Compliance of the ENP provisions with the task of implementing reforms in the field of public administration of the EaP countries

The Eastern Partnership initiative, as a component of the ENP, since 2009 aims to strengthen relations between the EU and six countries in the region: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The solution of the task of integrating the EaP countries should have been obtained based on ensuring their political association and economic integration with the EU. As a result, a belt of countries loyal to the EU should be formed. Unfortunately, instead of stability, the EU received a zone of military conflicts on its borders.

A number of factors predetermined this situation. From the very beginning, EaP was a heterogeneous structure, which proposed to unite a number of Eastern European states because of a common variant of cooperation with the EU. The fact that they had different political and economic priorities, their European integration strategies differed significantly, and the developers of the program were not taken into account.

For example, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus as priorities were limited only to contacts between people and the development of sectoral and economic cooperation with the EU. In turn, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine viewed the IG as an opportunity to get a clear perspective on membership. To confirm this perspective, the associated states of the EaP have even published a statement signed by the Georgian, Moldovan and Ukrainian

speakers of the parliaments in which they called on the EU to provide a membership approach for them.

On the EU side, the approach to the problem of the participation of countries in the EaP and membership prospects is also constantly changing. For example, when the EaP was only introduced in December 2008, the then President of the European Commission, José Emanuel Barroso, stated that the new policy is not a prelude to further EU enlargement and that the EU is “not able to offer the prospect of accession”.

A number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe supports the desire for membership by the EaP countries that have signed the Association Agreement with the European Union. They propose to consider the EP as a tool to prepare for the future EU accession process. The European Parliament supported this approach. In April 2014, he adopted a resolution that “under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union (EEC), like any other European state, Georgia, R. Moldova and Ukraine have European status and can apply for membership in the European Union, provided that they adhere to the principles of democracy, respect fundamental freedoms and human and minority rights and ensure the rule of law.

„Considering the issue of membership, the EU proposed a version of political association and economic integration based on the Association Agreement, including participation in a deep and comprehensive free trade area (AA / DCFTA). Georgia, R. Moldova and Armenia considered the task of the negotiations on the Association Agreement in 2007 by Ukraine and in 2010. Later, under pressure from the Russian Federation in September 2013, Armenia decided not to conclude an Agreement. Instead, Armenia joined the Eurasian Economic Union. Azerbaijan initially began negotiations on a new Association Agreement in July 2010, but subsequently also ceased negotiations.

Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, having signed the Association Agreement with the European Union, became the associated partners of the EU and began the implementation of European norms and law. Despite certain positive developments that are associated with the transfer of EU norms and law into national reform programs, using AA / DCCTS and visa liberalization for this, society in these countries has not yet felt their real results. Moreover, the growing trend is that AA / DCFTA provides less than expected. This situation is also aggravated by the fact that, unlike the countries that have become members of the EU, the associated EaP countries do not have access to the EU structural funds. This limits their possibilities for structural and sectoral modernization and for carrying out economic reforms. As a result, the lack of an economic reform policy remains one of the main criticisms for these countries.

The constraints of sustainable transformation in the EaP countries should also include obstacles related to personal interests, systemic corruption and poorly functioning government institutions.

The difference in the priorities of Georgia, R. Moldova and Ukraine in the development strategy from other partners of the EaP, the aggression of Russia also leads to the need to revise the existing concept of partnership. Its new version should take into account not only the policy of EU interaction and obligations towards individual EaP countries, but also the national context and the specifics of the reforms being carried out. The political elites and governments of these countries expect recognition of membership prospects, even if some EU countries do not support this possibility. The main reasons for the difficulties associated with the implementation of the ENP are the inconsistency of conditions on the part of the EU with the proposed incentives (excluding visa-free regime), given the uncertainty of some EU officials regarding the region, the lack of prospects for EU membership and the strong influence of Russia on the region cannot be successful. The existing problems can be solved only because of a radical renewal of the VP initiative. That is why EU High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini put forward the Eastern Partnership - 20 Results for 2020 document.

It is assumed that this new EU instrument will not only ensure the effectiveness of the ongoing reforms, but also the achievement of common goals for increasing stabilization and sustainability in the region, as provided for in the new EU Global Strategy. The proposed set of specific objectives of the EaP testifies to a more structured and focused approach from the EU. It should make it possible to make the implementation of the EaP policy more operational, which will enhance its effectiveness. It is assumed that such a policy will also become a deterrent to aggression on the part of Russia.

The Confrontation between the Practice of the ENP and the Geopolitical Influence of Russia

Russia's aspiration to undermine the existing security architecture and democratic institutions of the EU because of its hybrid military efforts is now recognized by the entire world community. Russia violated international law and the territorial integrity of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, annexed part of the territory of these countries and the Crimea, and supports the war in the eastern part of Ukraine. The Ukrainian-Russian conflict today dominates the EU agenda in relation to the region.

A significant problem in the current situation is also the fact that the EU's policy towards the Russian factor has not yet become a priority. Sanctions policy is ineffective. Despite the fact that Russia's aggressive policy in the region made it impossible to implement the ENP and EaP initiatives to ensure the stabilization and modernization of the region, the new strategy is still only at the level of discussions.

First of all, the EU should limit Russia in its desire to determine the European future of individual EaP countries. For this, it is necessary to solve the problem of countering aggressive actions and security risks from Russia. As a tool for deterring the EU, it is proposed to use the strategy of "hard power", which should include such an already tested strategic component as the impact on the policy of the Russian government based on sanctions. Unfortunately, today there are no reviews or reports of the ENP on the assessment of the effectiveness of sanctions. However, assessing the situation in Eastern Europe, we can conclude that the existing package of sanctions cannot fundamentally affect the situation in Russia itself or prevent its participation in regional conflicts.

Preventing the Russian aggression toward Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia has become a key component for ensuring long-term stability in the region. The main factor that predetermined its occurrence should be considered the initiative of the governments of the EaP countries on European integration. By putting their security at risk, they did not receive the necessary level of support in a conflict with Russia. As a result, further implementation of democratization and reform programs is under threat.

The solution of the problem under consideration can be based only on the addition of the traditional ENP with such a component as active opposition to the Russian factor. Considering the EU as a geopolitical rival, Russia will always oppose cooperation and European integration of the EaP countries. She views the ENP initiatives as an attempt to "capture" her traditional "zones of influence" in the post-Soviet space. As a result, for Russia and the EU, the struggle for influence in the region has been transformed into the task of ensuring security on its borders. At present, Moscow is taking active steps to weaken the influence of the EU in the EaP region, using a number of measures that are a combination of soft and hard power tools, including even military aggression. They are complemented by a hybrid policy to support the corrupt interests of individual representatives of the partnership countries. For example, in Moldova, this led to the polarization of society, since political parties urged citizens to choose between Russia and the EU, rather than focusing on the real problems of reform. Since 2014, Georgia and Ukraine have also been polarized, by definition, in the society of the geopolitical vectors of their development.

The current situation can only be overcome based on new approaches to EU policy. First of all, it should be based on a balance between the policy of sanctions and the continuation of economic cooperation with Russia in certain sectors. It is also necessary to consider that:

- the existing strategy of the ENP does not take into account the security component;
- there is no such incentive as EU membership;
- the allocated funds are insufficient to carry out economic reforms and move closer to the EU;
- the existing strategy of the ENP is often formal and not focused on obtaining a specific result.

The implementation of these proposals may partially correct the situation. However, it should be noted that in the EU there are opponents of the development of EU interaction with partners from the EaP. As an argument of their position, they set a prerequisite not only for the implementation of the association agreement and the DCFTA, but also for other bilateral or multilateral programs agreed between the EU and the partner countries. Thus, in practice, the EU invites the EaP countries to solve the problem of their security themselves, while maintaining the reform policy, which.

The ENP Report, published in 2016, proposed a new cooperation priority. Instead of striving for the transformation of partner countries, as it was before, the EU proposes to focus on their stabilization. In essence, the EU has changed its policy from attempts to export and promote norms and rights to an approach that could be defined as realism, if not pragmatism. In practice, this means that the EaP countries will be able to choose policies in which they see more benefits and avoid uncomfortable conditions on the part of the EU, especially for countries that do not have such contractual relations as the Association Agreement. The step taken by the EU is the recognition that the ENP in the EaP countries is not successful.

Results and Prospects for the Application of EU Regulatory Practice to the EaP Countries

Summarizing the results of the survey of a set of problems, the solution of which determines the effectiveness of reforms in Eastern Europe based on the EU regulatory model, we can draw the following conclusions. The results of the implementation of the EaP initiative as an instrument of the ENP over eight years confirm its importance not only for solving the task of forming the “ring of friends” of the EU. Despite the numerous problems accompanying the practical implementation of the neighbourhood policy, the ENP was able to create positive dynamics and show a real prospect of

democratization and reform based on European principles. The granting of trade preferences for Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, visa-free travel regime also confirmed the prospects of cooperation.

The determining factor of course should be the prospect of membership. It will allow not only to intensify the reform process, but also to determine their political, economic and social dynamics in the context of an effective transformation of the sphere of public administration. For their part, the governments of Georgia, R. of Moldova and Ukraine not only assumed political responsibility for the reforms, but also strive to ensure the irreversibility of the transformations in their countries. To support them, the EU needs:

- to ensure the possibility of a broader participation of the EU countries in the processes of democracy, economic development and security policy;
- use the experience of CEE countries in order to improve the efficiency and irreversibility of the reform process in the EaP;
- to link the task of carrying out reforms with various forms of support and technical assistance programs.

1.4. Conclusions to Section 1

The results of the studies conducted by the authors in the field of European integration and public administration practices presented in the monograph, reveal a possible assessment of the European integration processes and the policy of forming the pan-European structure of PU by the countries that have signed an association agreement with the EU. The significance of such an assessment is confirmed by the situation that has arisen during the implementation of reforms in such countries as Ukraine, R. Moldova and Georgia. Despite significant financial and technical support, problems such as corruption, low economic growth and insufficient development of the social sphere indicate that the existing approaches to reform are not effective.

Given the complexity of the problem of determining the optimal reform policy, the authors limit themselves to the local level. Under the condition of an appropriate institutional environment (and it has already been practically formed), the prepared proposals can be implemented at the level of local public administration authorities and contribute significantly to solving existing problems. In general, the EU, individual member countries and EaP partners should share responsibility for creating a new impetus for the development of the region. The following actions can be recommended for its implementation:

1. The EU should provide a clear membership perspective for the EaP countries. In accordance with Article 49, all partners who have fulfilled the conditions AA and DCFTA must be given special confirmation of the EU membership guarantee.
2. When implementing the ENP and the EaP initiative, the EU should take into account national political, economic and social specifics and offer participation in the most appropriate configurations. To do this, first of all, it is necessary to consider the possibility of organizing new forms of regional cooperation.
3. Stabilization in the EaP region should be the first priority for the current EU policy. To this end, it is necessary to pay special attention to solving security problems at the expense of the “hard power” mechanism, the policy of sanctions and countering “hybrid threats”.
4. The EU should rethink and find the best balance between budget and project support. Thus, part of the EU budget support funds should be redistributed to projects that relate not only to microeconomic indicators, but also to conditions in the field of governance, the rule of law, democracy and human rights.
5. EU economic development and market opportunities should be more constructive in supporting the implementation of the DCFTA. The EU and EaP partner countries should take concrete steps to develop a common economic space while respecting institutional norms. The common economic zone will accelerate the transformation in the EaP countries. Special attention should be paid to the expansion of additional multi-year zero tariff quotas for the EaP states, providing ongoing support to industries that are not ready to withstand competition in the EU market.
6. The EU should develop an existing approach to supporting the democratization and institutional sustainability of the EaP partners (fighting corruption, developing institutional capacity and specific capabilities) and define a clear connection of this paradigm with the overall security of these states.
7. For its part, the EU should not only strengthen its policy instruments in the EaP, but also address the root causes of the underlying problems that led to numerous present and possible future geopolitical dilemmas. Only under this condition, will the implementation of the Association Agreement with the European Union signed by Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia be effective and lead to the expected results.

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