

**Vadym Zheltovskyy**  
*Pultusk Academy of Humanities*

**POLISH-UKRAINIAN COOPERATION  
ON THE SELF-GOVERNANCE REFORM AND ITS IMPACT  
ON THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS**

**Summary:**

*The article puts focus on the main trends of the Polish-Ukrainian cooperation on the self-governance reform under the condition of the current crisis in Ukraine. Particular emphasis is put on the role and effectiveness of the Eastern Partnership Initiative as well as the initiatives on territorial cooperation. Furthermore, the role of Polish and Ukrainian non-governmental organizations in the reforming process in Ukraine is taken into consideration. Finally, the article makes an attempt to answer the question whether Polish experience of the self-governance reform might be beneficial on the Ukrainian ground as regards creating favorable conditions for the decentralization processes.*

**Key words:**

*Self-government reform, decentralization, non-governmental organizations, Eastern Partnership, cross-border cooperation*

**Introduction**

A respected Ukrainian newspaper *Day* published an article on the necessity to implement the Polish experience of decentralization reform in Ukraine putting the quote of the prime minister Yatseniuk as its title: *‘Decentralization in Ukraine will follow the example of Poland’*<sup>1</sup>. Given quote and similar declarations<sup>2</sup> of top Ukrainian officials responsible for self-governance reform may

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<sup>1</sup> <<http://www.day.kiev.ua/uk/news/060415-decentralizaciya-v-ukrayini-proyde-za-zrazkom-polshchi-yacenyuk>> (21.07.2015).

<sup>2</sup> During his first official visit to Poland, Petro Poroshenko asserted that Polish experience in decentralization reform is the most relevant for Ukraine and it would be taken as a basis during works of Constitutional Committee in Ukraine. See more:

<<http://www.5.ua/polityka/poroshenko-y-polshi-domovivsya-pro-dopomogy-z-reformami-v-ykrajni-64957.html>> (21.07.2015). Volodymyr Groysman requested Polish government to provide Ukraine with practical advice on self-governance reform. See more: <<http://nbnews.com.ua/ru/news/117235/>> (21.07.2015).

serve as a proof for the topicality of the analysis on Ukrainian – Polish cooperation regarding the issue of effective self-government implementation, the chances of the Polish model to be successful on the Ukrainian ground, and the significance of a similar cooperation between two states under the conditions of the current Ukrainian crisis.

### **New Parliament and the Place of the Self-governance Reform in the Political Agenda of Ukraine**

After unprecedented series of protesting events in Kyiv and major Ukrainian cities, annexation of Crimea peninsula by the Russian Federation and the launch of military actions in parts of Doneck and Lugansk regions, Ukraine entered autumn 2014 with a new President and new Parliament.

To follow the topicality of the self-governance reform in times of military and political tensions one should analyze the election programs of newly elected political parties in reference to the issue of decentralization and self-governance reform. The survey results illustrate that all parties declared their strong support for democratic transformations and decentralization. As a matter of fact, committee of voters of Ukraine<sup>3</sup> (komitet vyborciv Ukrainy) conducted comparative text analysis of all nine programs of parties participating in the 2014 early parliamentary election on the matter of decentralization. The table below shows the most popular key messages used in text of the programs concerning the plans on self-governance reform realization and amount of times they were repeated in given documents.

*Table 1. Major categories in election programs of political parties on the matter of decentralization and self-governance*

	Category	Repetition
1.	Decentralization of power, reform of self-governance	23
2.	More financial independence for local governments	18
3.	Increase of range of powers for local governments	14
4.	The abolition of district and regional state administrations and the creation of executive committees of local councils	14
5.	Improvement of administrative services system, implementation of e-government	9
6.	The implementation of referendums and other forms of direct democracy, empowerment of the community (councils or executive committees) to appoint/resign "officials of the central	8

<sup>3</sup> Ukrainian NGO, whose primary task is to monitor the election campaigns, maintain the link between voters and the government, protect electoral rights. Official website of the organization: <<http://www.cvu.org.ua/>> (31.07.2015).

	government"	
7.	Restriction of central authorities' functions	3
8.	Territorial administrative reform	2

Source: <http://buknews.com.ua/page/eksperty-kvu-pidtvordyly-shcho-u-prohramakhodnoho-z-magorytarnykh-kandydativ-ta-odniiei-z-politychnykh-partii-predstavliayut-rizni-chastyny-politychnoho-spektru-mistytsia-identychnyi-tekst.html> (21.07.2015).

In addition to that, another table below represents list of statements on decentralization which were included in the election programs of six parties that gained seats in Ukrainian parliament. The table gives more precise information concerning the link between most popular statements of the election campaign and programme of particular party that might be helpful in creating better picture of each party position.

*Table 2. The main ideas contained in the party programs.*

Main idea	Po-roshenko Block	People's Front	Radical Party	Bat-kivshchyna	Samopomich	Opposition block
Decentralization	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liquidation of local state administrations	Yes			Yes		Yes
Lustration	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Reduction of the number of state officials	Yes		Yes	Yes		
"single window"		Yes		Yes		
e-government		Yes		Yes		
Civil society control of the government		Yes		Yes	Yes	

Source: <http://voxukraine.org/2014/10/20/political-parties-programs-what-to-choose-when-theres-nothing-to-choose-from/> (31.07.2015).

Data from both tables give ground to confidently assert that the rhetorical tradition of emphasizing strong intentions to realize reform of local self-governance system remained and took top positions at election programs<sup>4</sup> of all

<sup>4</sup> More on contents of 2014 election programs of Ukrainian parties see: <http://voxukraine.org/2014/10/20/political-parties-programs-what-to-choose-when-theres-nothing-to-choose-from/> (31.07.2015).

political parties participating in the election campaign. As it came to light, Yulia Tymoshenko party Batkivshchyna has the biggest amount of promises including such innovations as “single window” and e-government platform to make the citizen-official cooperation easier that, in turn, is supposed to improve the performance of institutions in the long run.

Interestingly, all parties support the idea of lustration except for the Opposition Block, which pleads “to stop thoughtless firing of state officials and chasing of political opponents under the lustration motto”<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, the idea of downsizing the government is not declared by People’s Front, Samopomich party and Radical Party. The first two, however, put accent on creating conditions for civil society to control the government.

Particular attention should be paid to political declarations of winners of the election campaign: the Petro Poroshenko block and People’s Front party (Narodnyy Front) under the leadership of prime minister Yatseniuk and Oleksandr Turchynov, former close associate of Yulia Tymoshenko. As far as the presidential party is concerned, its election programme put issue of decentralization into the top category called ‘To live freely’. Among main aspects one might find declaration to give more rights and money to ‘hromady’ (communities) or to empower executive committees of local councils to make executive decisions. Moreover, specific features of every region are said to be taken into consideration<sup>6</sup>. Important moment is that the text of the document was written in March 2014 before presidential election and before military crisis escalation in Donbas, which may be an explanation for not putting security issue on the top position of party programme.

In terms of People’s Front party programme, it did put security matter at the very beginning of the document. In fact, some analysts regard that programme as the most realistic<sup>7</sup>. As for decentralization issue, the paper did not include much information. Party supported primarily financial decentralization. Emphasis was put on encouragement of citizens to take active position in building the democratic state as citizens were said to be the most important element of state construction<sup>8</sup>.

Overall, even though election programs did not introduce detailed plan for the reform, they sent significant signal for both Ukrainian and international observers on firm inte

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<sup>5</sup> <<http://www.cvk.gov.ua/pls/vnd2014/WP502?pt001f01=910&pf7171=199>> (16.07.2015).

<sup>6</sup> <[http://solydamist.org/?page\\_id=874](http://solydamist.org/?page_id=874)> (15.07.2015).

<sup>7</sup> <<http://apostrophe.com.ua/article/politics/2014-10-23/parad-peredviborchih-obtsyanok-abo-z-yakimi-programami-provdn-part-dut-na-vibori/612>> (15.07.2015).

<sup>8</sup> <<http://nfront.in.ua/programa-partii/>> (15.07.2015).

## **Overview of the Ukrainian-Polish Cooperation on the Matter of Self-governance European policy for Eastern partnership**

As it was presented in the introductory part, the Polish model of self-governance reform is said to be an example for Ukrainian authorities in their declared attempts to decentralize Ukraine and build democratic institutions on local scale around the country. Similar declarations predict intense cooperation between two sides and mutual eagerness to reach fruitful results. Therefore, this part of the article is focused on analysis of key elements of Ukrainian-Polish cooperation on self-governance reform with particular emphasis on steps undertaken by Poroshenko and Yatseniuk administration with their counterparts from Poland after the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine. Brief overview of main directions and results of cooperation between two states during previous administrations are presented in order to follow general tendencies of Ukrainian-Polish cooperation on the matter of decentralization.

Since the 2004 EU enlargement process, Poland has been perceived as a key country for success of European policy for Eastern partnership<sup>9</sup>. Significant aspect for the article analysis is that the Initiative was warmly received by local self-governments both in Poland and Ukraine as well in other countries covered by the project. As a matter of fact, the meaning of cooperation between Polish local self-governments and representatives of local and regional authorities in Ukraine was clearly emphasized by the Committee of Regions in its official documentations. The example might be the Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on the role of local and regional authorities within the Eastern Partnership published on 22 April 2009. The paper considered the development of local democracy as a central element in cooperation between the European Union and countries from the Eastern Partnership project<sup>10</sup>.

Similar opinion on importance of local institutions was expressed by the scholarship circles who underlined the key role of regional self-governments in implementation of European integration. Additionally, experts pointed to the significant social meaning of regional authorities' engagement in the Eastern partnership initiative. That in turn would lead to growing interest among citi-

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<sup>9</sup> In fact, the Eastern Partnership (EaP) initiative of the European Union intended to provide a venue for discussions of trade, economic strategy, travel agreements, and other issues between the EU and its eastern neighbors. Important aspect is that the project was initiated by Poland and a subsequent proposal was prepared in co-operation with Sweden. It was presented by the foreign ministers of Poland and Sweden at the EU's General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels on 26 May 2008. The Eastern Partnership was inaugurated by the European Union in Prague on 7 May 2009. More on the topic see: <<https://euobserver.com/foreign/26194>; <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2027636/Poland-takes-on-Russia-with-Eastern-Partnership-proposal.html>>; (03.08.2015); <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/may/07/russia-eu-europe-partnership-deal>> (03.08.2015).

<sup>10</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C\\_.2009.200.01.0031.01.POL](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2009.200.01.0031.01.POL) (03.08.2015).

zens in situation in the particular region. Furthermore, such partnership policy was considered as a promotion tool for basic values of European Union<sup>11</sup>.

Analysts agree that the strong and well organized potential of local and regional authorities improves efficiency of governance and plays key role for successful democratization. In this regard, empirical experience of self-governments (local, regional, state, European and international) cooperating in a decentralized way with partners in Eastern Partnership are considered to be of primary importance. At the same time, there appeared a need to create common discussion platform in order to receive optimal results and fruitful solutions using diverse experience of a wide range of local actors. Such platform known as Conference of Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (“CORLEAP”) was created in 2011 as the political forum of local and regional authorities from the European Union and the Eastern Partnership countries. CORLEAP is positioned by its initiators as the only EU platform that offers an opportunity to discuss the contribution by cities and regions in the development of the Eastern Partnership<sup>12</sup>.

It should be particularly emphasized that CORLEAP is considered to be a basis of the Eastern Partnership as far as its regional dimension is concerned. Being created as a result of common efforts of the European Commission and the Committee of the Regions, CORLEAP opened doors for political cooperation between local and regional authorities in the EU and partners from the EaP. According to Taczyńska, such cooperation would result in the increase of local authorities’ impact on regional political strategy development and would strengthen the citizen-official cooperation in partner states that all together would lead to stronger local government<sup>13</sup>.

Interestingly, it was the presentation of the Vinnytsia Region of Ukraine on 15 September 2011 in the Committee of the Region that was the first presentation of a region from the partner country in the Committee within the framework of the “open door policy” suggested in CORLEAP action plan<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> More on this topic see: J. Taczyńska, *Współpraca polskich jednostek samorządu terytorialnego z władzami regionalnymi i lokalnymi oraz innymi podmiotami z państw objętych inicjatywą Partnerstwa Wschodniego*. Online access:

<<http://www.umww.pl/attachments/article/36935/Partnerstwo%20Wschodnie%20%E2%80%93%20Samorzady.pdf>>; (03.08.2015); M. Kołodziejcki, K. Szmigiel, *Międzynarodowa współpraca transgraniczna i międzyregionalna w kontekście polityki regionalnej państwa na lata 2007-2013*, Centrum Rozwoju Lokalnego, Warsaw 2004. Opinion of the Committee of the Regions: <[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C\\_.2011.042.01.0064.01.POL](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2011.042.01.0064.01.POL)> (3.08.2015).

<sup>12</sup> <<http://cor.europa.eu/en/activities/corleap/Pages/corleap.aspx>> (03.08.2015).

<sup>13</sup> J. Taczyńska, *Współpraca polskich jednostek...*p. 37. More on goals of the CORLEAP initiative see: <<http://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Pages/corleap-conference-29-sept-2014.aspx>> (04.08.2015).

<sup>14</sup> <[http://cor.europa.eu/en/activities/corleap/Documents/activity\\_till\\_vilniuns.pdf](http://cor.europa.eu/en/activities/corleap/Documents/activity_till_vilniuns.pdf)> (04.08.2015).

As far as Ukraine is concerned, commentators regard learning from the Polish and European experience as productive for a number of reasons. As a matter of fact, interregional cooperation is considered to be beneficial for the regional adaptation to the European standards. New opportunities for the participation in a range of joint programs provide Ukrainian regions with opportunities to develop effective institutional component and reach fruitful results in terms of interregional and cross-border cooperation. Finally, similar cooperation encourages citizens to actively participate in life of their region and implement the European standards of governance on local scale<sup>15</sup>.

## Euroregions

Analysts underline the significant role of Euroregions, which became an assisting tool of relationship regulations between Poland and its non-EU partners. Vasylova summarizes criteria for the identification of Euroregions:

- an association of local and regional authorities on either side of the national border, sometimes with a parliamentary assembly;
- a transfrontier association with a permanent secretariat and a technical and administrative team with own resources;
- of private law nature, based on non-profit-making associations or foundations on either side of the border in accordance with the respective national law in force;
- of public law nature, based on interstate agreements, dealing among other things, with the participation of territorial authorities<sup>16</sup>.

Further research in that area proves that the important feature of Euroregions' institutions is their ability to act on a wide range of directions: from economy to culture. Moreover, institutions of Euroregions have possibility of cooperating with the non-governmental sector in a spontaneous way. Such characteristics made Euroregion a very effective tool of activity in border areas of Central-Eastern Europe<sup>17</sup>.

At the same time, Wolczuk and Wolczuk point out to the beneficial impact of euroregions in establishing direct links between regional and local government bodies assisting in elimination of communist era legacies when there were no relations between two states. However, scholars assert that lack of finance became an impediment for the concept of euroregions to develop Polish-

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<sup>15</sup> N. Buglay, *Ukrainian-Polish Cooperation at Regional Level in the Context of the European Integration*, "Central European Papers", 2013/1/2, p. 81.

<sup>16</sup> V. Vasylova, *Euroregions in Ukraine-Romania-Republic of Moldova Area: Expectations, Experience and Prospects*, online source:

<[http://www.ceswp.uaic.ro/articles/CESWP2012\\_IV4\\_VAS.pdf](http://www.ceswp.uaic.ro/articles/CESWP2012_IV4_VAS.pdf). (04.08.2015); More on Euroregions see: [http://www.aebr.eu/en/news/news.php?cat\\_id=1](http://www.aebr.eu/en/news/news.php?cat_id=1)> (04.08.2015)

<sup>17</sup> J. Taczyńska, *Współpraca polskich jednostek...*, p. 45.

Ukrainian contacts<sup>18</sup>. Similar ideas are expressed by Hooper and Klamsch who state that there is a considerable interest in Ukrainian and Polish border regions to participate in common projects. However, scholars underline that the Euroregions are outside mainstream national administrative structures and therefore are often marginalized in the project selection process by central governments<sup>19</sup>.

As far as Ukrainian case is concerned, presidential order on Strategy of economic and social development of Ukraine “On the Road to European Integration”<sup>20</sup> on 2004-2015 stressed the necessity to implement the following:

- to increase the role of the regions in economic cooperation, active position of regions in joining the international organizations and groups, intensification of interregional and cross-border cooperation;
- to solve common regional and inter-regional development issues by combining the financial resources of local authorities and local governments;
- to increase the role of regions in the implementation of environmental policy;
- to adapt national legislation on regional policy with the norms and standards of the European Union.

In fact, 19 out of 25 Ukrainian regions that constitute 77% of Ukrainian state are border regions. Majority of the regions participate or participated in a number of Euroregions with partners from such countries as Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova, Russia, and Belarus (See map 1). In other words, the partners in terms of cross-border cooperation might be divided into two main categories: EU and non-EU partners.

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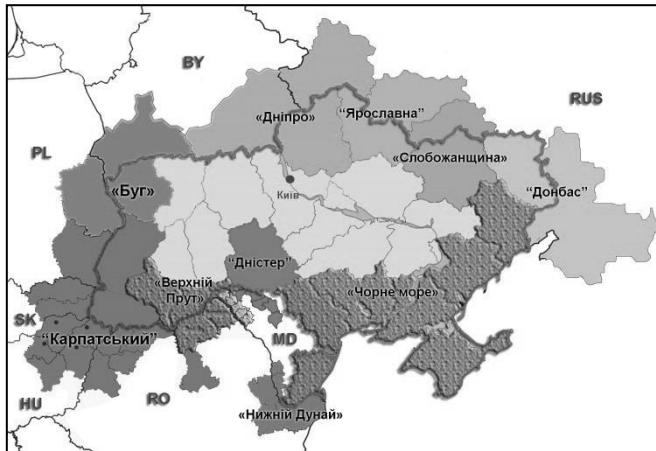
<sup>18</sup> K. Wolczuk, R. Wolczuk, *Poland's Relations with Ukraine: A challenging 'strategic partnership'* [in:] *Through the Paper Curtain: Insiders and Outsiders in the New Europe* (eds. J. Smith, C. Jenkins), London 2003, p. 82.

<sup>19</sup> B. Hooper, O. Kramschi, *Cross-Border Governance in the European Union*, Routledge 2004, p. 122.

<sup>20</sup> <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/493/2004>. The order lost its validity on 10.07.2015, (04.08.2015).



Map 1. Ukrainian participation in Euroregions



Source: [http://www.quadrivium.org.ua/ua/articles/view?obj\[userinput\\_id\]=3350613](http://www.quadrivium.org.ua/ua/articles/view?obj[userinput_id]=3350613) (04.08.2015).

Dolotina names major spheres of cooperation between member states in Euroregions with the participation of Ukraine:

- science and innovative activity;
- tourism and culture;
- improvement of border crossing process;
- improvement of life quality for citizens;
- ecology and environment protection;
- infrastructure, communication and transport;
- economic development;
- prevention of and dealing with emergency situations.

Scholar underlines the potential of Ukrainian regions for the development of cross-border cooperation in the long perspective. In terms of interaction and cooperation of Polish and Ukrainian border institutions, the projects are mainly aimed at the formation of civil society and overcoming negative historical and cultural stereotypes existing among residents of cooperation areas. However, similarly to European colleagues, Dolotina points out a number of problems that impede given process: lack of financing, insufficient level of the development of cross-border infrastructure, imperfectness of legal framework for cross-border cooperation, uncertainty regarding legal responsibilities of local authorities, significant differences in economic development of partner regions, etc.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> K. Dolotina, *European Regions on Territory of Ukraine: State and Problems of Development*, "East Ukrainian National University Scientific Volume # 4" 2013, 192, p. 196. More on topic of areas of Polish-Ukrainian cross border cooperation see: H. Shcherba, *Cross-border Cooperation between Ukraine and Poland under Condition of Financial Crisis*, electronic access:

In their article, Hordienko, Bondarenko and Martynenko refer to similar problematic aspects defining main tasks for further development of Euroregions:

- adoption of necessary tools to gradually minimize and eliminate the administrative and legal impediments which restrain the cross-border cooperation;
- adjustment of Ukrainian legal basis to the international norms and development of legal acts regulating the activity of local authorities that are engaged in Euroregions cooperation;
- development of complex state programs of regional cooperation and their funding<sup>22</sup>.

In this regard, Velychko asserts six steps for Ukrainian government to take so that the Euroregions in Ukraine function effectively:

1. a strategy for each Euroregion;
2. Custom and Tax Codex improvement;
3. development of financial infrastructure of Euroregions (e.g. banks, funds);
4. transport system in accordance with the European standards;
5. creation of cross-border information server;
6. establishment of monitoring and coordinating sub-councils in European regions<sup>23</sup>.

### **Non-governmental Organizations**

In addition to governmental ties between Poland and Ukraine, particular emphasis should be put on cooperation between representatives of the non-governmental sectors. The analysis shown below presents main directions of major NGOs acting in Poland and Ukraine as well as level of their engagement in the policy making process of local governance under current political circumstances.

To remind, institutions of civil society are seen as the following:

- as a tool for self-expression of individuals, their self-organization and realization of their own interests. Solving a number of significant issues of social importance they assist the state in implementing its functions;
- as a guarantee for citizens' individual rights and may serve as a helping instrument in cases of citizens' struggle with the state;
- as an advocate for particular social group at the level of state official;
- as a basis for democratic state order, etc<sup>24</sup>.

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<<http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-9d8d224d-4982-4d7b-b3e1-cda39e6d8159>> (02.09.2015).

<sup>22</sup> <[http://business-inform.net/pdf/2011/8\\_0/13\\_16.pdf](http://business-inform.net/pdf/2011/8_0/13_16.pdf)> (02.09.2015).

<sup>23</sup> V. Velychko, *The Features of Functioning Euroregions in Ukraine*, "Economy and Region #4", 2012, 35, p. 134.

Speaking about scholarship approach in Poland, Aleksander Smolar considers NGOs to be a part of civil society underlying its role in different types of relationships among people at the level beyond the state and the market. Such relations come from common interests, beliefs and ideas. Particularly, the analyst stresses the importance for state not to interfere with NGO activities and the need to create conditions for NGOs to act independently and autonomously<sup>25</sup>. Furthermore, an Ukrainian expert Antonina Kolodii makes an attempt to summarize the theoretical research on the issue of civil society illustrating its contradictory nature. In fact, the contradictory character lies in two directions. The first approach states that civil society is supposed to support liberal institutions and relevant civic culture that is favorable to liberal political institutions. The second approach, however, sees civil society as a power resisting to government and giving space to diverse beliefs and practices<sup>26</sup>.

In this regard, a character of organizations acting in Poland and Ukraine should be analyzed. As a matter of fact, apart from focus on local democracy Polish and Ukrainian non-governmental organizations concentrate on a wide range of areas: macroeconomic reforms, regional government, independent media, human rights, education, science, culture, and the consequences of Polish integration into the European Union. In fact, the major areas of cooperation included the exchange of Polish reform implementation after 1989. Krzysztof Stanowski divides the cooperation between Polish and Ukrainian NGOs after 1989 into three stages:

1. 1989 – 1994 – initial period of creating contacts between partners. Mainly it included organizations engaged in opposing activities such as: Fundacja Edukacja dla Demokracji, Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka, Fundacja Ośrodka KARTA, Fundacja Solidarności Polsko-Czesko-Słowackiej, or Instytut na rzecz Demokracji w Europie Wschodniej IDEE. The period is characterized by the launch of the first international projects. Additionally, the donations were provided by American foundations: National Endowment for Democracy, Ford Foundation or Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.
2. 1995 – 1998 – the period is characterized by engagement of Polish NGOs actively performing on Polish inner stage in the international projects. As an example might be Fundacja Demokracji Lokalnej.
3. Since 1999 – significant increase of NGOs cooperating with Ukrainian partner organizations. Practically, every respected NGO in Poland was engaged in different forms of cooperation with Ukrainian counterparts. At the same time, a number of local organizations from Eastern and

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<sup>24</sup> <[http://political-studies.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Kolodiy\\_Na\\_Slyahu.pdf](http://political-studies.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Kolodiy_Na_Slyahu.pdf)> (07.09.2015).

<sup>25</sup> <<http://www.eastbook.eu/en/2013/04/country-en/poland-en/aleksander-smolar-appealing-to-politicians-means-appealing-to-both-the-ruling-party-and-the-opposition/>> (25.08.2015).

<sup>26</sup> <<http://political-studies.com/?p=742>> (25.08.2015).

Southern regions of Poland expressed their will to cooperate with the Ukrainian side<sup>27</sup>.

Particular attention should be put to educational initiatives and scholarship funds such as the Lane Kirkland Scholarships Program<sup>28</sup> or PAUCI Foundation<sup>29</sup>.

To sum up, the cooperation between Ukrainian and Polish non-governmental organizations has been active and fruitful in a number of areas since 1989. Experts agree that majority of projects concentrated on results of Polish reforms and possibilities of their implementation on Ukrainian ground. At the same time, the evaluations of NGOs' role remain ambivalent. On the one hand, the active role on NGOs on the international arena is complimented for numerous benefits they bring such as flexibility, ability to make quick decisions and act independently while making proposals on particular issue<sup>30</sup>. On the other hand, a number of analysts point out to the fact that cooperation between non-governmental cooperation and local government units has not reached satisfactory level so far.

### Summary

As far as conclusion remarks are concerned, the attention should be put on the *Memorandum of cooperation to support local self-government reform in Ukraine* that was signed in Warsaw on 17 December 2014. The signed document predicts cooperation in the form of consultative activities during preparation of draft normative and legal acts on local self-government reformation in Ukraine and educational activities in the area of local self-government reform implementation, particularly, educational and training visits, financed from the state budget of the Republic of Poland, provision of support under mediation of non-governmental organizations.<sup>31</sup>

Similar declarations from state authorities as well as experience of cooperation between Ukrainian and Polish local and regional authorities and NGOs give ground for certain level of optimism concerning the future of their cooperation and the future of the self-governance reform in Ukraine. However, to suc-

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<sup>27</sup> P. Kosiewski, *Lata doświadczeń i perspektywa europejska*, [in:] „*Polska-Ukraina, Współpraca organizacji pozarządowych*”, Warsaw 2003, p. 8-9.

<sup>28</sup> The programme supports democratic and free market transformations in other Central and Eastern European countries. The Program is financed from the funds of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and administered by the Education for Democracy Foundation. For more information see: <<http://www.kirkland.edu.pl/en>> (07.09.2015).

<sup>29</sup> Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation Foundation PAUCI supports the Ukrainian efforts to integrate into the EU and transatlantic structures, to develop the civil society structures, etc. For more information see: <<http://en.pauci.org/about.php>> (07.09.2015).

<sup>30</sup> More on the role of NGOs in the state foreign policy see: *Partnership in Foreign Policy. A proposal for co-operation between public authorities and non-governmental organizations*. [in:] “*Social Diplomacy. The Case of Poland*”, G. Czubek (ed.), Warsaw 2002.

<sup>31</sup> <<http://decentralization.gov.ua/en/news/item/id/294>> (01.08.2015).

cessfully reach given objective a number of aspects should be taken into consideration:

- the level of academic engagement in the process of project development in particular region;
- the level of trust and mutual interest in the relationship between theorists and practitioners;
- the level of motivation and encouragement from the state as regards the scientific-administrative cooperation, etc.

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