

## "New Regionalism" and Its Implementation in Ukrainian Legislation: The Terminology and the Political Implications

**Nazarii Melnyk**

PhD candidate in Political Science, Ukrainian State University Mykhailo Drahomanov, Kyiv, Ukraine

Office address: Symyrenka St., 14/9, ap.360, 03134

Email: nazariimel@gmail.com

**Abstract.** This paper investigates the terminology associated with "New regionalism" and its integration into Ukrainian legislation, analyzing its political and administrative implications. "New regionalism" is a contemporary administrative-territorial reform, with a focus on the principle of subsidiarity, which minimizes central authority intervention in local affairs. While not explicitly present in its regulations, certain subsidiarity elements are part of Ukrainian law. The study explores the adoption and implementation of "New regionalism" principles and terminology within the country's legal discourse. The second aim of the study was to examine how "New regionalism" could potentially influence the political dynamics and administrative structures, particularly in the context of decentralization efforts. By employing systematic and comparative methodologies alongside principles of dialectical analysis, the study offers insights into the evolving landscape of Ukrainian political and administrative terminology alongside its structures, which might play a crucial role in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

**Key words:** "New regionalism", terminology, political discourse, subsidiarity, regional political subjects, Ukraine, regionalization.

**JEL Code:** G35

### Introduction

There are multiple reasons for reforming regional policy, with the primary factor being the increase in mobile capital and the growing role of regional elites. Traditional state and local governance structures have struggled to keep pace with technological advancements and the expanding influence of transnational corporations within the confines of centralized economic management. The need for more effective management in the regions has matured, and the authorities have begun to grant wider powers and autonomy to the localities. This is how the principle of subsidiarity came into effect.

"New regionalism" emerged in this context as a contemporary administrative-territorial reform, centered on subsidiarity, aimed at curbing central authority intervention in local affairs and democratizing the society. Importantly, this reform introduces specific terminology and concepts that are not necessarily explicitly delineated in Ukrainian regulatory frameworks, although the underlying principles they represent are inherently embedded within the legal framework of the country. Their practical realizations can be seen in several cases. For instance, local elites have begun to assume the role of key actors in implementing social and economic programs for a particular region on behalf of the central government. Broader powers allow regional authorities and local communities to directly influence the reform of the social sector, by implementing new programs in the infrastructure direction, in the field of education, culture, healthcare, etc. The Russian-Ukrainian war introduced certain adjustments to the decentralization process, changing the functions of state and regional political subjects, and the priority of identities and value orientations.

The purpose of the article is to study the terminology associated with "New regionalism" integrated into Ukrainian legislation, underscoring its political and administrative implications. In particular the study examines the influence of regional political subjects in the process of the reform of power decentralization, in the context of "New regionalism" and the analysis of the nature of their interaction in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war. At the same time, we can single out previously unresolved aspects of the problem. The analysis of the "subsidiarity" principle as a tool for ensuring the influence of regional political actors on the decentralization reform in Ukraine within the discourse of "New regionalism," and the contradictions of regional identities, remain relevant.

Various research methods and scientific approaches are used in the article. In particular, the basics of dialectical analysis (to understand the peculiarities of regional political subjects and their influence on the decentralization reform, the interrelationship of these processes), a systematic approach (which allowed generalizing and systematizing the views of scientists on the problem being studied), and a comparative method (to compare the researched concepts, phenomena, and terminology - "regionalization," "federalization," "decentralization," "New regionalism," "subsidiarity").

The work used the Constitution of Ukraine, the Budget Code of Ukraine, as well as the Laws of Ukraine "On the Basics of State Regional Policy" and "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine" as a legal framework.

### **"New regionalism": causes and historical prerequisites of development**

The process of reforming administrative and territorial entities is not an easy task. Each region's formation faces difficulties in combining economic and cultural aspects. Economic expediency is necessary for region formation, yet its ethnic component can be diverse. The association of territories with similar economic structures may not coincide with the characteristics of different linguistic, ethnic, or cultural groups. Therefore, groups with different cultural features may coexist in the same region or be separated territorially.

The main question facing modern society is how to prevent the loss of democracy's main postulates during global changes on the political map of the planet, including the election of authorities, the protection of minority rights, and the existence of political rights and freedoms. The problem of forming regional identities with their contradictions in the field of national, ethnic, religious differences, and conflicts became especially relevant at the end of the 20th century when a socio-political crisis began in Europe. The French sociologist Emile Durkheim, who described the formation of the collective consciousness of European societies at the beginning of the 20th century, stated that a European society with a certain independence and initial organization is striving to be formed by a spontaneous movement over the European peoples. He argued that if the creation of a single human community is impossible (which, however, has not been proven), then the formation of an ever-increasing society brings us infinitely closer to the goal (Durkheim, 1933). The collapse of the huge empire of the Soviet Union and other authoritarian superpowers of that time facilitated these processes, resulting in the appearance of new state entities on the political map and the problem of administrative and territorial changes turning into rapid regionalization and decentralization. Such democratic processes became decisive in Europe at the turn of the century. However, this reform cannot solve all regional problems and respond to all the challenges of the time. We can only talk about certain steps and a direction towards achieving understanding between different regional elites. In general, this process of transformation of the management model in the 21st century has acquired revolutionary features, and the concept of "New regionalism" has become so large-scale that the administrative-territorial reform should be called a "management revolution" (Naumkina, 2015).

Of course, in the 1980s, it was difficult to imagine the pace at which changes from authoritarian forms of government to democratic ones would occur and what consequences world civilization would face. At that time, the famous analyst E. Toffler honestly admitted that the collapse of the USSR would not happen soon, although he stated that "decentralization has become a hot political issue from

California to Kyiv" (Toffler, 1980: 179). Instinctively, he felt that increasingly frequent manifestations of independence, autonomy, and decentralism, which began to develop into open forms of separatism, would lead to the triumph of centrifugal forces, and this would mark an end of the society of the industrial era. He argued that such a situation, when the old rules have outlived their time and anti-centralist tendencies enter the arena of political struggle, would inevitably result in the emergence of a new society with a new administrative order. According to the scientist: "If someone tries to manage the economy of the Third Wave with the help of centralized tools, he will be like a doctor who soullessly prescribes the same dose of adrenaline to every patient, regardless of what exactly hurts him (Toffler, 1980: 17). Indeed, the beginning of the 21st century showed that the boldest and most pessimistic predictions of E. Toffler came true. His metaphorical image of the "clash of waves" found its materialization and exposed the contradiction of socio-political forces, the apotheosis of which was revolutionary changes in the political Olympus of the planet. The ideologies of regionalism and decentralism, which filled the entire political movement, became decisive in these transformations and gave a powerful impetus to the processes of European integration. The struggle for democracy, people's rights, and the right to self-determination took on revolutionary tendencies in the new political discourse, leading to the emergence of the distinct phenomenon known as "New regionalism" in contemporary encyclopedias.

Today, the 21st century is often called the "century of regions," and this is no longer perceived as a tribute to fashionable "multipolar utopias" (Nagorna, 2008: 17). In fact, we are now living in a period of great transformations of the world order, which existed for centuries and changed in an evolutionary way, without destroying the established coordinate system. It managed to persist for a considerable period of time, and the Westphalian world system, with its indestructible foundation of national states, produced positive results. However, at the turn of the millennium, a revolutionary transformation of the global political landscape took place, and supranational and subnational levels in interstate mediation gradually became less effective. Regions began to assert their self-government and economic, and even political, independence more and more often.

The downsizing process associated with the EU has led to increased competition between regions; a trend that is connected both with the neoliberalization of the global economy and with the regionalist reaction of regional subjects: "Subjects of the state regional policy are only those subjects that are classified by them as primary. However, judicial authorities and district state administrations which contribute to the implementation of state regional policy but do not participate in its formation should not be considered as 'main secondary subjects'" (Chelak, 2015: 214). European politics and planning accordingly underwent a transition to economic "entrepreneurship" at the regional, sub-state level in the direction of achieving global competitiveness, which allowed "to attribute the definition of local identities to strategies of competitiveness" (Paasi, 2009). The NUTS statistical regions (nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques) are crucial to the creation of the vision of a "Europe of the regions", while any arbitrary delineation of regional can lead to deep economic problems in regional politics.

### **European neoregionalism**

There is a close connection between regionalism, federalism, and the movement to create a single federal Europe. The recent movement to create a "Europe of the Regions" is one expression of these connections. However, there are many types of regions and certain forms of regional politics that may not necessarily be an expression of regionalism or European federalism. It can be said that the "Europe of the regions" is being formed based on the understanding that significant changes are taking place in the nature and functions of the nation-state in modern Europe. These changes provide new opportunities for regions to become more important policy subjects in the wider European context (Loughlin, 1996).

National territories are gradually losing their exclusive economic space and monopoly on the inviolability of borders. Centrism in state administration is also succumbing to the onslaught of global

corporations that promote regionalization and take an active part in administrative-territorial transformations. "The creation of subregional organizations is an example of cross-border cooperation that not only brings economic benefits but also creates a climate of trust, contributing to the search for constructive solutions to overcome crises, as well as to the implementation of joint projects aimed at achieving the well-being of the states involved in the process and their regions. In addition, the role of actors of international relations is gradually shifting to the regions, in particular through the conclusion of framework international agreements on cooperation. There is such a concept as international marketing of the region, i.e. creating an image of the region, an investment-attractive climate, as well as targeting the needs of target groups of customers of the territory's services" (Bibikov, 2011).

The new reality requires society to regionally reform the very foundations of state formation, "eroding" the fixed frameworks and concepts of the Westphalian world system. Such revolutionary distortions of its foundations often become stressful for society and lead to political instability and serious conflicts.

Of course, the phenomena of regionalism are not extensive enough to speak about a global crisis of state-building, chaos, and degradation of permanent rules of political regulation. But these phenomena are progressing on all continents, and in recent decades, especially in Europe, they have manifested themselves quite actively. The Ukrainian researcher N. Myrna states: "Regionalization processes in Europe have been developing intensively in recent years. Their special activation is felt within the framework of the development of European integration, which in itself provokes the need for democratic ethno-national policy and the introduction of decentralization and autonomy both at the level of individual countries and at the level of the EU" (Myrna, 2013: 4). One thing is certain: the wind of global changes in the regions is increasing every year, and the trends of "New regionalism" are spreading at a rapid pace. We are witnessing a change in the political map of Europe, new independent political entities have appeared, decentralization has reached different corners of the continent. For example, in Belgium the dominant idea of federalism has taken hold, five regions of Spain achieved a special status of self-government, a similar situation exists in Italy, while Great Britain allowed self-governance to its regional ethnic groups of Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales. "The practice of British devolution shows that in order not to face such problems as asymmetric, bilateral nature of agreements between the center and the region, it is necessary to develop a planned strategy for decentralization. The central government must take into account the interests and needs of the population of the regions to preserve the integrity of the country. Decentralization is able to ensure the democratization of social relations, because it does not involve separation, but the creation of opportunities for the development of the state based on the priority of the powers of the regions" (Samuseva, 2021). Today we are witnessing the ongoing struggle for self-determination of individual national regions in Portugal continues, the efforts of the Basques to have their own independent republic, etc. The general tendency towards separation from central state institutions, the demands of certain ethnic groups for regional independence are just different forms of the same decentralization, are efforts to optimize management and reform the old rules of coexistence of centers and regions. Modern "neo-regionalism" acts as an actualized form of all previous varieties of regionalism, as a "soft and balanced response to the strengthening of regionalist tendencies" (Nagorna, 2008: 31). However, the modern model of optimizing the reform of state institutions through gradual and balanced regionalization is not only realistic, but also productive. Nonetheless, the success of such a political process is possible only if the integrity of the state is preserved.

### **The principle of subsidiarity as an integral element of decentralization**

The existing experience of European Union countries in reforming the political management system allows for a deeper study of the term "regionalism", since the three components of this process of regionalization and integration have already become encyclopedic and have been tested in practice. Firstly, conducting a truly democratic ethno-national policy; secondly, implementing decentralization, autonomization, and federalization at the level of a separate state, as well as the EU; and thirdly,

applying the principle of subsidiarity, the essence of which is that power should be as close as possible to citizens, and only as much as is necessary to ensure the ethno-political stability of society is voluntarily transferred to the "upper floors" (Shemshuchenko et al., 2004). The last third principle of subsidiarity is effective when "political power intervenes only when and to the extent that society and the groups that make it up, from individuals to families, local communities, and other larger groups, are unable to meet diverse needs" (Telytska, 2015: 57). In the opposite case, we return to authoritarianism, or the other extreme - separatism.

That is why decentralization should be deliberate, planned, and take into account the dangers and risks that such reform processes carry. It is necessary to determine the limits of the permissible independence of regions, the autonomy of their management, therefore, the principle of subsidiarity is extremely important in the period of formation of new relations and administrative and territorial changes. After all, the main goal of decentralization is not simply the transfer of part of its powers to local political entities, but primarily the achievement of a high quality of life in the regions through the optimization of the limits of the intervention of the central government in the affairs of local self-government. According to M. Shashina, "Decentralization ensures an increase in income to the budgets, which will contribute to the financing of programs and projects of socio-economic development of the regions and the improvement of the quality of life of the population in the regions. In addition, accountability on the part of territorial communities and control over the use of budget funds by public councils are gaining importance, which will contribute to the further growth of budget revenues" (Shashina, 2018: 108). At the same time, it is necessary to balance on this threshold of political consensus so that the basic principles of state policy are preserved, the constitution is not violated, and the rights of all citizens of the country are protected, regardless of their national-ethnic origin or religion.

In order to maintain a balance between the political elites of the central and regional authorities, it is necessary to clearly distinguish the powers of one and the other, to define by law which functions will be performed by the executive power, and which will be entrusted to local self-government bodies: "The very functions of local self-government are a reflection of its political nature, an indicator of the level of its development, and the direction of its implementation" (Hlyvka, 2016: 180). In this way, the legal boundaries of the newly formed administrative-territorial unit are outlined, which are determined by the principle of subsidiarity.

### **The terminology of "subsidiarity" in Ukrainian legislation**

The principle of subsidiarity is not present in the legislative acts of Ukraine, while it has secured its place in the documents of the European Union. However, it is not appropriate to claim that there is no legal basis for decentralization, as the main law of Ukraine - the Constitution (Constitution of Ukraine, 1996) emphasizes that "the territorial structure of Ukraine is based on the principles of unity and integrity of the state territory, a combination of centralization and decentralization in the exercise of state power, balance of socio-economic development of regions, taking into account their historical, economic, ecological, geographic and demographic characteristics, ethnic and cultural traditions." The principle of subsidiarity is even described in the commentary to Article 132 of the Constitution of Ukraine: "the combination of centralization and decentralization in the exercise of state power is manifested in the fact that the central bodies of state retain the right to protect and ensure the interests of the state as a whole, while the remaining functions are transferred to local authorities, primarily to the competence of local self-government bodies" (Primishev, 2001: 225). In the Ukrainian Law "On the Principles of State Regional Policy" (1997), the term "subsidiarity" is not used explicitly, but is instead described as the "principle of transferring powers to the lowest level of governance for the most effective implementation." The Budget Code of Ukraine (2010) does use the term "subsidiarity" as a principle of "allocating expenditures between the state budget and local budgets, as well as between local budgets, based on the need for maximum approximation of guaranteed services to their direct consumers." Other legislative acts related to the territorial organization of

power also indirectly contain the basic principles of subsidiarity, conveying the essence of this phenomenon through certain norms.

Article 2 of the Ukrainian Law "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine" (2015) refers to local self-government as the "guaranteed right of a territorial community - residents of a village or voluntary association in a rural community of residents of several villages, townships and cities - to independently resolve local issues of importance." This provision already includes one of the requirements of the principle of subsidiarity - the right of territorial communities to independently resolve urgent local problems without seeking permission from higher authorities. Without optimizing the system of local government bodies and regional communities, and without clear determination of their functions at the legislative level, it is impossible to achieve successful territorial decentralization and create the necessary conditions for the effective formation of territorial communities. The discussion is not only about the political discourse and legal field but also about the economic component, which involves owning all possible resources to accomplish the tasks set before the self-government bodies. It is encouraging that the draft laws regarding state regional policy, self-government, and administrative-territorial reform contain the basic postulates of the subsidiarity principle.

As we can see, the legal framework for carrying out administrative reform exists, although it requires new adjustments and additions. Ensuring this principle reduces the risk of conflicts between regional political entities, which are the driving force behind local self-government reform in Ukraine.

### **Subsidiarity relations and decentralization of power in Ukraine**

High levels of local and regional identity are important for subsidiary political relations. The entities of these political formations are the foundation of the organization of political life in local communities, and the result depends on their activity and initiative: "Strengthening the effectiveness of communities encourages local government bodies and local self-government bodies, business communities, residents, civil society organizations, and helps them form a common vision of the future of their community as the basis for local identity" (Zhalilo et al., 2019: 77). A large distance between two different identities, between regional and local, creates inertia towards inaction and regression. Thus, the success of regionalization depends on the attitude towards external changes, taking into account all factors and dangers of current globalization.

Although there are contentious issues and competition between the state and local regional elites, they are still forced to find compromises because they are interdependent in this process. Without such interdependence, the social organism cannot function. A rural territorial community cannot exist autonomously outside the state management organism, without the support of regional elites and central authorities. "Today, in the conditions of decentralization reform in Ukraine, territorial communities have gained greater freedom of action and the ability to significantly influence the life of the region. Effective political communication and discourse should become a way for united territorial communities to realize their economic, political, and cultural potential, and for the central government - a way to increase its legitimacy" (Zhurba, 2021: 2).

At the same time, the government is forced to share powers with local self-government bodies and provide more autonomy to regions because they are unable to solve the country's social problems on their own. Therefore, the task of the state is to transfer the levers of influence on local socio-economic reforms to regional administrative formations, to provide favorable legislative conditions for new political entities, to provide financial assistance while maintaining control over the legality and quality of services. In fact, this is the principle of subsidiarity, when the government does not interfere with the autonomy of local communities, retaining the functions that contribute to the effectiveness of the provision of management services.

By and large, the goal of both the government and the communities is the same - to meet the needs of its members, that is, the local population in the social sphere, to improve their well-being, to protect

human rights, freedom, and to develop their spiritual and personal world comprehensively. V. Hladii notes that "the central government can only interfere in the activities of local authorities when the problem goes beyond their powers, and the transfer of powers to a higher level of management can only be carried out if it is impossible to perform them at a lower level" (Hladii, 2015: 74). In this case, we have a subsidiarity principle of relations between the government and civil society, the government and regional entities of management, and the latter - directly with civil society.

This triangle should exist as a single organism of the functioning of a new system of relations. Therefore, the reform of local self-government and the administrative-territorial structure is an extremely important and urgent task of the state. It should take place with the support and active assistance of the population of Ukraine, in the spirit of popular rule and the principles of democracy.

### **Decentralization reform. Risks and challenges for Ukraine**

Such global reforms in the country's governance cannot but have a stressful impact on the country as a whole. There are valid concerns about sudden changes in the political component of regional reform, fear of losing the integrity of the management mechanism of the unitary state, the dangers of federalization, and so on. Opponents of regionalism fear the manifestation of separatism, the formation of "principalities", which may eventually lead to the country's division. However, we have an objective reality - a multiethnic, multilingual country with people of different beliefs. Moreover, a large country has significant specific differences both in ethnic and economic regional levels. If the country's politics do not take these differences into account and do not seek compromises, then there will be no progressive development. The administrative-territorial reform is ripe, the question is how it should be carried out so that the regions have their relative autonomy while preserving the unity of the country and its independence as a sovereign European state.

However, the danger of federalization in a country that has been fighting for its independence from external influences of more powerful political, economic, and military states still exists. Rather, it is worth talking about the positivity of the movement towards regional decentralization, giving more autonomy to regions in addressing their local issues. And in this context, regionalization, as a form of decentralization, does not pose a threat to the country's integrity. This is demonstrated by the experience of Europe and confirmed by influential Western policies. After all, it is important to integrate the needs of various regional groups, their rights, and freedoms into a common state mechanism. Decentralization precisely contributes to this process, caring about the interests of regions, strengthening their self-government, which improves the overall political climate, prosperity, and, as a result, the desire to unite and live in such a democratic state: "Decentralization is carried out purposefully in order to optimize the practical solution of issues of national importance, as well as the implementation of specific regional-local programs" (Kovtun, 2019: 57). On the one hand, local and regional elites, demanding rights for autonomy in their economic activities, the resolution of internal socio-economic problems, prevent the return to an authoritarian way of governance and oppose the violation of constitutional rights of civil society. With such subordination and reasonable distribution of powers, the freedom of citizens achieves the highest level of protection and development.

But why does regionalization scare many Ukrainians? Because in the event of a failed reform, the positive aspects of this process can quickly turn into negative phenomena of separatism and federalization, which in today's conditions will lead to the division of the country. But with a carefully measured approach and responsibility of local and regional elites, the leadership of the state, and adherence to the Constitution of Ukraine, regionalization, on the contrary, will counteract manifestations of separatism. By endowing regions with the right to their own legislation and self-government, relations between individual regions become closer and more effective, and therefore, there is no basis for questions of separation. It is also worth studying the global experience of similar regional reforms, which shows a significant difference in the economic growth between authoritarian countries with a centralized governance system and those that have undergone successful decentralization. "It is known that high indicators of the quality of life of citizens and levels of economic

development of the most developed countries in the world are caused, in particular, by a relatively high level of decentralization and deconcentration, that is, a significant volume of powers and corresponding resources delegated by states to regional and local levels of management" (Vasylychenko et al., 2015: 15). These countries are on the list of economically developed and strong states, where many local problems and socio-economic issues are resolved at the regional and local levels. An example of a successful path in this direction can be seen in the United States of America.

### **Regional policy actors and decentralization of power in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war**

The full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation has been the biggest challenge for Ukraine since it regained its independence. Among other things, the war has exacerbated problems in achieving stability in regions and communities. The course of hostilities has demonstrated the strength and effectiveness of horizontal ties within Ukrainian society. While regional and district military administrations and regional councils focus on armed combat with the aggressor, a significant portion of the burden of war falls on territorial communities. In addition to accumulating and delivering volunteer aid to the Armed Forces of Ukraine and territorial defense forces, receiving and resettling internally displaced persons, local councils focus on supporting business and ensuring the functioning of the local economy and livelihoods of the population.

Local self-government in its modern form has never faced the challenges that territorial communities of Ukraine have encountered due to the large-scale invasion by Russia. Ukrainian regional entities not only undergo their own crash test in absolutely harsh and dangerous conditions, but also implement on the ground the principles and standards of major international documents in the field of local self-government, which are particularly important during a war, including:

- proving the validity of the subsidiarity concept enshrined in the European Charter of Local Self-Government (Strasbourg, 15 October 1985);
- confirming the expediency of expanding the concept of local self-government in the version of the World Declaration on Local Self-Government (Rio de Janeiro, 26 September 1985), namely, as "the right and duty of local authorities to regulate and manage public affairs under their own personal responsibility and in the interests of the local population";
- "boldly and decisively take responsibility for creating, directly or indirectly, economic growth" in localities in accordance with the European Charter of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions of 1992 (Potapenko et al., 2023).

International partners acknowledge the success of the reform of the territorial organization of power in Ukraine. That is why the main tasks of the Government for 2022-2025 are aimed at ensuring sustainable development of regions and territorial communities. At the same time, these plans have undergone forced adjustments due to the Russian aggression. Decisions of the central government, caused by the need to respond quickly to the conditions of wartime, suspended the processes of decentralization in certain areas.

The wide-scale invasion of Russia into Ukraine has posed serious challenges for regional policy subjects, including the need to repel the occupiers, provide material and technical support for territorial defense and national resistance, organize the evacuation and reception of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Management of regional and local levels has changed, military administrations have been created in all regions and in many communities. This has made it possible to adapt regions and communities to wartime conditions.

Significant changes have also occurred in the attitude towards regional identification. The reform of power decentralization has contributed to the development of regional identities, but it is the war that has influenced the strengthening of the national identity, which has become a guarantee of preserving the Ukrainian nation. Ukrainian researcher L. Korobka notes: "Thus, we can say that identity is most

vividly manifested in the most crisis situation - the war, which serves as the most expressive and effective factor of crystallization of national consciousness and identity" (Korobka, 2022: 129).

Against the unprecedented threats to global democracy created by Russia's aggression, regional policy subjects in Ukraine argue that expanding the competence of local self-government by delegating some of its powers to government bodies is a justified and reasonable step. The wartime management system has ensured stability at the regional and local levels. In the free territories, these subjects have become a basic link in ensuring the stability of the rear and social stability. The stability of territorial communities, which are the basis for the development of the country's regions, has become an urgent task.

The war has caused significant damage to the state and has been a challenge for local self-government in Ukraine, but it has also initiated a number of important positive changes of a strategic nature. According to O. Lyashenko, a new generation of politicians is emerging in Ukraine, and "their historical mission should be to translate the ideas of statehood into the formation of their own authority and trust in the State, in contrast to the total distrust of previous years; national-civil values in contrast to regional and local ones" (Lyashenko, 2022: 22). The changes also concern a significant increase in the effectiveness of interaction between the bodies of state power and regional political subjects, including representatives of civil and volunteer organizations. Communities, through their joint work, not only strengthen their own potential, but also play an important role in strengthening the country's economic potential. In the conditions of war, local authorities work, provide services, and help the army. The work is not only carried out in the rear, but also in temporarily occupied territories and even where battles are taking place.

## **Conclusion**

Although not explicitly articulated in Ukrainian legislation, the emergence of "New regionalism" is discernible within its regulatory framework. Specifically, foundational principles of this modern administrative-territorial reform, as evidenced by the terminology embedded in legal documents, have indeed begun to take root. Considering the above-described current political discourse and economic situation in Ukraine, an alternative path for resolving the crisis and avoiding further internal confrontation seems to be the policy of regionalization. Thus, the central government should limit its influence on local authorities in the regions, grant autonomy to communities to address their urgent problems, and focus on national matters. Tasks that cannot be solved by local and regional political elites include the functional responsibilities of central government institutions, all branches of state power, and, above all, the development and implementation of a strategy for the country's economic development, protection of its integrity and sovereignty.

The authority of the state includes the implementation of domestic and foreign policy, the implementation of its structural and investment projects, the development of laws, norms, standards, and regulations of interregional level, and the implementation of policies in areas vital to the country, such as urban planning, social and demographic, natural resource, etc. The state must guarantee and protect the rights and freedoms of its citizens, ensure the country's security, protect its sovereignty at the international level, and maintain law and order. These processes should take place with the support of regional political entities, through various consultations involving representatives of local elites, which is a mandatory condition for the implementation of the power decentralization reform in the conditions of the "New regionalism" concept. In the current realities of the Russian-Ukrainian war, decentralization has become a necessary component of preserving the territorial integrity of the state and national identity. Thanks to the decentralization processes that have already taken place and continue to develop, there is a consolidation and close cooperation between the state, regional entities, and citizens to achieve the common goal of protecting the Ukrainian state.

## References

- BIBIKOV, D., 2011. Тнк в процесі співіснування глобалізації та регіоналізму. *Ефективна Економіка*, 7. *Budget code of Ukraine* (the official bulletin of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (BVR), Pub. L. No. 50–51 § 572, 2010). URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/en/2456-17#Text>
- CHELAK, O., 2015. Регіональна політика як складова державної політики сучасних країн. *Актуальні Проблеми Політики*, 56, 211–219. URL: [http://dspace.onua.edu.ua/bitstream/handle/11300/3078/APP\\_56-25.pdf?sequence=1](http://dspace.onua.edu.ua/bitstream/handle/11300/3078/APP_56-25.pdf?sequence=1)
- CONSTITUTION OF UKRAINE (The Official Bulletin of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (BVR), Pub. L. No. 30 § 141, 1996. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/en/254к/96-вр#Text>.
- DURKHEIM, E., 1933. *The Division of Labor in Society*. Free Press.
- HLADII, V., 2015. Місцеве самоврядування як ресурс політики євроінтеграції: досвід Вишеградської групи та перспективи для України. University Ivan Franko, Lviv.
- HLIVKA, A. O., 2016. Функції місцевого самоврядування в умовах трансформації політичної системи України. *Актуальні Проблеми Політики*, 58, 180–189. URL: [http://dspace.onua.edu.ua/bitstream/handle/11300/8866/Hlyvka\\_APP\\_58-18.pdf?sequence=1](http://dspace.onua.edu.ua/bitstream/handle/11300/8866/Hlyvka_APP_58-18.pdf?sequence=1)
- KOROBKA, L., 2022. Transformation of community identities under the influence of war. *Proceedings of The Role of Psychology and Pedagogy in the Spiritual Development of Modern Society*, 129–132. URL: <http://www.baltijapublishing.lv/omp/index.php/bp/catalog/view/245/6861/14344-1>
- KOVTUN, Y., 2019. Упорядкування поля функцій системи органів публічної влади в умовах децентралізації. *Актуальні Проблеми Державного Управління*, 1, 54–59. URL: [http://www.oridu.odessa.ua/9/new\\_options/pdf/016/Zbirnik-1\(77\)-2019.pdf#page=54](http://www.oridu.odessa.ua/9/new_options/pdf/016/Zbirnik-1(77)-2019.pdf#page=54)
- LAW OF UKRAINE. *On Local Self-Government in Ukraine*, Pub. L. No. 13 § 90, 2015. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/156-19>.
- LAW OF UKRAINE. *On Principles of State Regional Policy*, Pub. L. No. 24, § 170, 1997. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/280/97%D0%B2%D1%80>.
- LOUGHLIN, J., 1996. “Europe of the Regions” and the Federalization of Europe. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 26(4), 141–162. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.pubjof.a029875>
- LYASHENKO, O., 2022. Соціологічні маркери нового політичного покоління в Україні. In Y. Z. Shaihorodskiy & S. L. Chunikhina (Eds.), *Нове покоління українського політикуму в умовах війни та повоєнних суспільних трансформацій* (pp. 20–23). Talkom. URL: [https://ipiend.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Zbirnyk\\_zh\\_materialamy\\_kr.stolu-2023.pdf](https://ipiend.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Zbirnyk_zh_materialamy_kr.stolu-2023.pdf)
- MYRNA, N., 2013. Сучасні тенденції регіоналізації та їх роль в європейських інтеграційних процесах. *Державне Будівництво*, 1, 1–10. URL: [http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis\\_nbuv/cgiirbis\\_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP\\_meta&C21COM=S&2\\_S21P03=FILA=&2\\_S21STR=DeBu\\_2013\\_1\\_34](http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbuv/cgiirbis_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP_meta&C21COM=S&2_S21P03=FILA=&2_S21STR=DeBu_2013_1_34)
- NAGORNA, L., 2008. *Регіональна ідентичність: український контекст*. ІПіЕНД імені І. Ф. Кураса.
- NAUMKINA, S., 2015. Адміністративно-територіальне реформування, як центральна ідея концепції нового регіоналізму. *Регіональна Політика: Законодавче Регулювання Та Практична Реалізація*, 97–102. URL: <https://repositary.knuba.edu.ua/items/7299182e-484e-4cd6-9d6b-e9ccd2d2b0d3>
- PAASI, A., 2009. The resurgence of the ‘Region’ and ‘Regional Identity’: theoretical perspectives and empirical observations on regional dynamics in Europe. *Review of International Studies*, 35(S1), 121–146. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210509008456>
- POTAPENKO, V., BARANNIK, O., & BAKHUR, N., 2023. *Місцеве самоврядування як чинник стійкості тилу*. URL: <https://niss.gov.ua/publikatsiyi/analitichni-dopovidi/mistseve-samovryaduvannya-yak-chynnyk-stiykosti-tylu>
- PRIMISHEV, I., 2001. Державний устрій України: проблемні питання теорії, практики державного будівництва та удосконалення його форми. *Культура Народів Причорномор'я*, 26, 222–226. URL:

<http://dspace.nbuu.gov.ua/bitstream/handle/123456789/108372/50-Primushev.pdf?sequence=1>

- SAMUSEVA, K., 2021. Концепція деволуції в історії Великої Британії. *Юридичний Науковий Електронний Журнал*, 4, 143–147. URL: [http://www.lsej.org.ua/4\\_2021/35.pdf](http://www.lsej.org.ua/4_2021/35.pdf)
- SHASHINA, M., 2018. Функціональні особливості структурної модернізації регіональної економіки України. *Проблеми Економіки*, 4, 120–126. URL: [https://www.problecon.com/article/?year=2018&abstract=2018\\_4\\_0\\_120\\_126](https://www.problecon.com/article/?year=2018&abstract=2018_4_0_120_126)
- SHEMSHUCHENKO, Y., BAVKIN, V., & GORBATENKO, V., 2004. *Політологічний енциклопедичний словник*. Генеза.
- TELYTSKA, V., 2015. Принципи субсидіарності та децентралізації у сфері надання послуг. *Proceedings of the Conference Управління Інноваційним Розвитком Територій*. URL: [http://www.dbuara.dp.ua/konf/konf\\_dridu/mup\\_konf\\_2015/pdf/57.pdf](http://www.dbuara.dp.ua/konf/konf_dridu/mup_konf_2015/pdf/57.pdf)
- TOFFLER, A., 1980. *The Third Wave*. William Morrow and Company, Inc. URL: [https://ia801301.us.archive.org/26/items/TheThirdWave-Toffler/The-Third-Wave\\_-\\_Toffler.pdf](https://ia801301.us.archive.org/26/items/TheThirdWave-Toffler/The-Third-Wave_-_Toffler.pdf)
- VASYLCHENKO, H., PARASIUK, I., & YEREMENKO, N., 2015. *Планування розвитку територіальних громад. Навчальний посібник для посадових осіб місцевого самоврядування*. URL: <https://www.auc.org.ua/sites/default/files/library/1plangrweb.pdf>
- ZHALILO, Y., SHEVCHENKO, O., & ROMANOVA, V., 2019. *Децентралізація влади: порядок денний на середньострокову перспективу*. URL: <https://niss.gov.ua/sites/default/files/2019-05/2019.pdf>
- ZHURBA, Y., 2021. *Політична комунікація об'єднаних територіальних громад в умовах децентралізації* [Black Sea National University named after Petro Mohyla]. URL: <https://krs.chmnu.edu.ua/jspui/handle/123456789/1618>

**Nazarii Melnyk:**

PhD candidate in Political Science, Ukrainian State University Mykhailo  
Drahomanov, Symyrenka St., 14/9, ap.360, 03134; +380501371719; nazariimel@gmail.com

**Research Interests:** "New regionalism" terminology in Ukrainian law, Political terminology evolution in conflict, Political technology impact in war