

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCE OF CIVIL SERVANTS AS A MECHANISM OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF UKRAINE

## სახელმწიფო მოსამსახურეების ინგლისურენოვანი კომპეტენტურობა როგორც უკრაინის ევროპული ინტეგრაციის მექანიზმი

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### ABSTRACT

*The article researches the question of English language competence as a mechanism of European integration of Ukraine. In particular, such notions as "mechanism of state governance", "mechanism of European integration" and "English language competence" are studied in their interrelation. The terms, stated above, are still in the process of definition and clarification, which makes it necessary to outline the existing approaches to their understanding both in national and foreign discourse, and highlight the important present aspects for our research.*

*It is stated that English language competence of Ukrainian civil servants is a prerequisite for the ongoing Eurointegration of Ukraine. It influences the proficiency of civil servants, corresponding to personnel management mechanisms of state governance, and lead to intensification of intercultural communication not only at official meeting, but also due to personal contacts. The last contributes to a more fluent discussion of arising questions and information exchange. The efficiency of governmental work under the developing relationships with (and in future within) the EU has the importance that I hard to overestimate.*

*Therefore, conclusions have been made as to the place of English language competence among mechanisms of European integration of Ukraine. Separate suggestions regarding necessary ap-*

*propriate changes in the sphere of civil servants preparation and work have been given.*

**Key words:** *a mechanism, state governance, European integration, civil servants, English language competence, Ukraine, the European Union, improvement.*

### ანოტაცია

სტატიაში გამოკვლეულია ინგლისურენოვანი კომპეტენტურობის, როგორც უკრაინის ევროპული ინტეგრაციის მექანიზმის საკითხი. კერძოდ: მათ ურთიერთ კავშირში შეისწავლება ისეთი ცნებები როგორებიცაა: „სახელმწიფო მართვის მექანიზმი“, „ევროპული ინტეგრაციის მექანიზმი“ და „ინგლისურენოვანი კომპეტენტურობა“. ზემოთ აღნიშნული ტერმინები ჯერ კიდევ იმყოფებიან მათი განსაზღვრისა და დაზუსტების პროცესში, რაც აუცილებელს ხდის შესაბამისი მიდგომების გამონახვას მათი როგორც ეროვნულ ასე უცხოურ დისკურსში გაგებისათვის.

სტატია ამტკიცებს რომ უკრაინის სახელმწიფო მოსამსახურეების ინგლისურენოვანი კომპეტენტურობა ქნარმოადგენს უკრაინის ევროინტეგრაციის აუცილებელ პირობას. აღნიშნული მოქმედებს სახელმწიფო მოხელეების პროფესიონალიზმზე და მივყავართ კულტურათა შორისი ურთიერთობების აქტივიზაციისაკენ არამარტო ოფიციალურ შეხვედრებზე არამედ პირად კონტაქტებშიც. უკანასკნელი ხელს უწყობს წარ-

მოქმენილი საკითხების თავისუფალ განხილვას და ინფორმაციის გაცვლას.

*ზემოთაღნიშნულიდან გამომდინარე გაკეთებულია დასკვნები, უკრაინის ევროპული ინტეგრაციის მექანიზმებს შორის ინგლისურენოვანი კომპეტენტურობის ადგილის თაობაზე. შემოთავაზებულია ცალკეული წინადადებები შესაბამისი ცვლილებების შესახებ სახელმწიფო მოხელეების მუშაობისა და მომზადების სპეროსთან მიმართებაში.*

***საკვანძო სიტყვები:** მექანიზმი, სახელმწიფო მართვა, ევროპული ინტეგრაცია, სახელმწიფო მოხელე, ინგლისურენოვანი კომპეტენტურობა, უკრაინა, ევროკავშირი, გაუმჯობესება.*

**Issue outline.** The European integration of Ukraine is a challenge, which meets the whole Ukrainian society in the variety of its functions and representations. Under the circumstances of necessary reforming of most spheres of public life, such as economic regulations, production quality management, education, entrepreneurship etc., the sphere of public administration, managing the rest of state activities, creating and following rules, is viewed as a priority one field for modernization. No doubt, the effectiveness of implementation of reforms in state governance directly depends upon the people who take the responsibility.

The question of language competence arises due to the multi-cultural community of the European Union and, consequently, the necessity to find a common means of interaction. The issue of “lingua franca” for the EU is not a new one and has been discussed by a number of scientists (U. Ammon, J. Beacco, M. Byram, Anne Gellert-Novak, Jürgen Gerhards-Udo Guttemann, Robert Phillipson, Eija Ventola, Abram Swaan and others), as well as the issue of language of international communication for Ukrainian specialists (O. Busol, O. O. Havrylova, O. O. Hryhorian, A. A. Demianiuk, L. V. Derbeniova, H. P. Yevsieieva, I. V. Zirka and others). Arguments are given for English language as the most widely-spread international language used by EU officials and EU community on the whole. Therefore, the issue of English language competence among Ukrainian civil servants is becoming more and more urgent as relations between Ukraine and the

EU are becoming closer. So far, complex studies on the issue haven't been conducted.

**The aim** of this article is to outline the place of English language competence within the mechanisms of European integration and ground its importance for civil servants of Ukraine under the modern conditions.

To reach the aim we are to reach the following **objectives:**

- clarify the notion of a mechanism of state governance and a mechanism of European integration in particular;
- outline the place of English language competence in the system of mechanisms;
- prove the necessity of English language competence for civil servants of Ukraine.

As there is no single definition of English language competence, the author, having analysed the existing definitions, understands the notion as a complex quality of the personality acquired in the process of studying the English language, which consists of linguistic, communicative and socio-cultural knowledge, professional skills and personal attitudes, is based on experience and manifests itself in the overall ability and readiness for successful activity in English-language surrounding.

**The main part.** Present-day public administration undergoes a number of changes connected with raising its efficiency and bringing up to European standards. At the same time, the issue of English language competence stays behind overall attention, though its importance is out of question, as the language situation in the EU is no secret. The activity of such complex unity of different nations and cultures with common administrative offices leads to unification of communication means, especially in terms of language. Philologists will agree that perfect interpretation from one language to another is impossible due to differences in lexis and grammar structures, as well as the interpreter's competence. Moreover, it takes time and efforts, making communication less quick and effective. So, interaction in one language is the key to success in joint intercultural activities.

To prove that English language competence is a mechanism of European integration of Ukraine, firstly let us clarify what is a mechanism in the sphere of state governance. As states O. V. Ortse-

va, the efficiency of the system of public administration depends upon the presence of successfully functioning mechanisms, which provide: coordinated, purposeful and effective leadership of the public processes of the state; proper organizational and managerial influence on public development of the state; the realization of the goals and objectives of public administration - both general and personified, which need to be addressed in specific spheres of public life [1]. Therefore, the main prerequisite of successful European integration of Ukraine is the development of a complex of effective mechanisms for regulating this process.

A number of scientists study the term “a mechanism of state governance”, among them: V. Bakumenko, Yu. Komar, V. Korzhenko, T. Lozynska, O.Korotych, N.Nyzhnyk, O.Mashkov, V. Malynovskyi, L. Prykhodchenko, L. Yuzkov and others. At the same time, so far a single definition of the term hasn't been developed.

The Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Public Administration defines the mechanisms of state governance as follows: these are ways to resolve the contradictions of a phenomenon or process in public administration, the consistent implementation of actions based on fundamental principles, target orientation, functional activity with the use of appropriate forms and methods of management. According to the presentation form it is a schematic representation of the static-dynamic (structurally-functional) content of the management process as the interaction of the subject and object, the unity of activity and relations, the functioning of a particular system or subsystem. The composition of the elements and the order of functioning of methods of the state governance is determined by the purpose, means of influencing the object, the links between the elements of the system, the availability of resources and the possibilities of a particular situation. Mandatory components are: goals, principles, functions, methods, information, technology and technical means. Depending on the means that are used in specific methods of state governance, they can be political, economic, social, organizational and legal, as well as complex in accordance with the main spheres of public activity [2, p.421].

V.Y. Malynovskyi defines mechanisms of state governance as a set of tools for organizing man-

agement processes and ways of influencing the development of controlled objects based on the principles of scientific validity, objectivity, integrity, coherence with the use of appropriate management methods aimed at the realization of the objectives of public administration [3, p.103].

O.B. Korotych gives the following definition: mechanisms of state governance - management mechanisms that will allow to integrate the system of public administration and processes, which, in their turn, will allow the implementation of state-management influence on the socio-economic territorial complex of the state [4, p.60].

O. Fedorchak states that that the concept of “mechanism” and the notion “process” can not be compared with each other, since the process is only a sequence of actions, stages of transformation of something, and the mechanism is a much broader concept that encompasses various tools, levers, means, incentives of state governance. The researcher also distinguishes between the concept of “mechanism” and the notion of “instrument” or “tool”, since the mechanism of state governance, in addition to instruments, also includes methods, levers, policies, legal, regulatory and information support etc. The existence of instruments as it is can not ensure the practical implementation of public administration. Based on the existing definitions of the concept, the scientist understands the mechanism of state governance as a system intended for the practical implementation of public administration and the attainment of set goals, which has a definite structure, methods, levers, instruments of influence on the object of management with the relevant legal, regulatory and information support. At the same time, the structure of the mechanism of state governance in a certain area of social development will change, depending on the peculiarities of one or another sphere. [5].

O.V. Radchenko outlines the following characteristics of the mechanism of state governance [6, p.20]:

- It is a product of organized activity;
- It has a purpose or function;
- It contains a sequence of actions, a certain type of movement;
- It involves mostly one-sided influence with a clearly defined vector of influence;

- It has a subject and an object;
- It is characterized by a rigid relationship, the regularity of the process, the rules of interaction;
- Its functioning is ideally aimed at automatism;
- Its construction is structurally functional;
- It has signs of an open or closed system.

Accordingly, he gives the following definition: the mechanism of state governance - a systematic unity of institutions, structures, sequential actions, forms, states and processes in the state as a product of organized human activity, aimed at realizing the interests and needs of people and addressing pressing socio-political issues at the expense of state influence and regulation of social life on the basis of established social values, norms and rules; is a form of realization of the state functions and has bodies of state governance as a subject [6, p.24].

Depending on what specific problems there are and how they are solved with the use of a specific state mechanism of administration, the mechanism of state governance can be complex and include several independent mechanisms. According to O. Fedorchak, a comprehensive mechanism of public administration may consist of such types of mechanisms:

- economic (mechanisms of state management of banking, monetary, foreign investment, investment, credit, tax, insurance activities etc.);
- motivational (a set of command-administrative and socio-economic incentives that encourage civil servants to work effectively);
- organizational (objects, subjects of state administration, their goals, tasks, functions, methods of management and organizational structures, as well as the results of their functioning);
- political (mechanisms of formation of economic, social, financial, industrial policy etc.);
- legal (normative and legal provision: laws and resolutions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, decrees of the President, resolutions and orders of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, as well as methodological recommendations and instructions etc.) [5].

Considering the definitions and characteristics of mechanisms of state governance, we use the term in the meaning of a complex notion, comprising various means and actions for influencing the spheres of state development in a defined direction. In this context, the mechanisms aimed at European integration of Ukraine acquire value.

Having analysed the processes that preceded the accession of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to the EU in 2004 and 2007 (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Republic of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Bulgaria, Romania), Y. Palapnuk singled out the following mechanisms for Eurointegration:

- conclusion of "European agreements", or association agreements between the states of the region and the European Union, and their implementation;
- defining by the Copenhagen Summit of the criteria for membership in the EU and their gradual implementation by candidate countries for membership;
- harmonization of the domestic legislation of the associated countries with the legal framework of the European Union;
- Euro-Atlantic integration in connection with the implementation of EU common security policy;
- the participation of the states of the CEE in the multilateral programs of the EU and receiving significant financial assistance from the EU funds for system reforms and adaptation to European standards [7, p. 121 - 122].

In general, the researchers include the following mechanisms for ensuring Ukraine's transformational development and its integration into the European Union:

- conceptual - available basic approaches to the transformation processes outlined in conceptual documents (conceptual foundations, concepts, strategies) etc .;
- financial and economic - envisage the development of state-targeted long-term programs. A specific list of such programs should be defined and submitted to the President of Ukraine;
- political and legal - provide for the develop-

ment of a new regulatory framework at all levels - constitutional, legislative, and subordinate - on uniform, unchanging conceptual principles;

- institutional - creation of an integrated mechanism of legal, scientific-methodical and political support of transformational processes;
- personnel - provide for the reform of the civil service and service in local self-government bodies in order to ensure their professionalism and political neutrality;
- informational and educational - provide for the practical creation of a single information space for state authorities and local self-government bodies, ensuring unhindered access of the public to the development of decisions of all authorities (openness of the authorities) and direct participation of the public and public institutions in the elaboration of the principles of the public life transformation [8, p. 543].

These mechanisms are not narrow-national. Some of the current EU member states have gone through the path of Europeanization. The European institutions were periodically monitoring the state of public administration in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Thus, in 1992, the institution of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development SIGMA carried out an examination of the state of public administration with a view to its improvement in five areas: administrative reform and national strategies; management of political activities, cost management, management of public services and administrative supervision. In 1997, the European Commission analysed the readiness of potential members for joining the EU. Estonia, Poland, Slovenia, Hungary and the Czech Republic (Luxembourg Group) were recognized as ready for the negotiations, while Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia (Helsinki Group) were classified as not ready [9, p.4].

In most of the candidate countries, ministerial committees on European integration were created. In Bulgaria, special meetings of the Council of Ministers were held on a monthly basis, which considered the political and strategic issues of

European integration. Considerable attention was paid to ensuring that the new legislation complied with EU standards, in particular by the Ministry of Justice and approximation of legislation. Following the publication of the results of the audit in Bulgaria, new laws were adopted: on state administrations, on the civil service; The Strategy for the Modernization of the State Administration aimed at improving the service of the population and increasing the prestige of the civil service was adopted. The policy of modernizing public administration was one of the six priorities of the state program "People - the wealth of Bulgaria". The first part of the program, "Strengthening the Capacity of the Civil Service", was aimed at creating a modern state administration, professional and independent, focused on the use of business management technologies and on issues of international character, based on partnership and decentralization, and information technology. The second direction of the program was to strengthen the administrative capacity to implement the obligations associated with EU membership. The third direction was strengthening the administrative capacity of Bulgaria's participation in the Structural Funds (macroeconomic, financial and administrative aspects) [9, p.5-6].

The primary measures in the field of improving human resources management were defined as follows: improvement of the procedure for entry into civil service and professional development; regulation of the mechanism of ensuring the mobility of civil servants; increasing the connection of the growth of wages of employees with the assessment of the results of their work and the introduction of additional material incentives for this; provision of connection of professional promotion with qualification improvement; development of career development system taking into account the main results of work, but not age or experience; allocation of necessary funds for the training of employees. Following the adoption in 2006 of the new law on civil servant, work was carried out on training and retraining of staff in cooperation with international institutions. Priority courses included: administrative activity, ethics and prevention of corruption; information technology, English and French [9, p.8-10].

The above-mentioned mechanisms of European integration are also clearly followed in the history of the development of relations between Ukraine and the European Union. For example, the basic document that previously defined the legal mechanism of bilateral cooperation between Ukraine and the EU was the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between Ukraine and the European Communities and their member states. The PCA established a partnership between the EU and its member states, on the one hand, and Ukraine on the other. The legal framework for cooperation between Ukraine and the EU was not confined to the PCA, but also included other documents that were adopted after the entry into force of the PCA: international agreements with the ECOV and Euratom, the European Union's Common Strategies etc. [10, p. 136, 139]. Since 1993, the main institutional mechanism of cooperation between Ukraine and the EU could be called the Interdepartmental Committee of Ukraine on European Union Affairs. However, in connection with the ratification of the PCA, the institutional mechanisms of cooperation between Ukraine and the EU that were in force ceased to be in force in 1998. Preparations for the creation of new institutional mechanisms of bilateral cooperation began before ratification of the PCA, when the Presidential Decree "On enforcement of the Agreement on partnership and cooperation between Ukraine and the European Union, and improvement of the mechanism of cooperation with the European Union", the Ukrainian part of the Cooperation Council between Ukraine and the EU, chaired by the Prime Minister of Ukraine, and the Ukrainian part of the Cooperation Committee as a subsidiary body of the Council were created [10, p. 177]. During the implementation of the state eurointegration policy of Ukraine, a system of ensuring the national mechanism of adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to EU legislation was created. Thus, in 1999, the Cabinet of Ministers issued a Resolution "On the Concept of Adaptation of Ukrainian Legislation to the Law of the European Union"; in 2003, the Concept of the National Program for Adaptation of Ukrainian Legislation to the EU Law" was adopted, and in March 2004 – the Law of Ukraine "On the National Program

for the Adaptation of Ukrainian Legislation to the Law of the European Union", which established the procedure for cooperation between the Verkhovna Rada and the executive authorities in the field of adaptation of legislation to EU standards. The first stage of the Program was designed for the period up to the end of the PCA, and in 2009 the Verkhovna Rada adopted the Law of Ukraine "On Making Amendments to the National Program of Adaptation of the Ukrainian Legislation to the Legislation of the European Union", which provided for the prolongation of the first phase of the Program for the period until the end of the PCA, that is, before the entry into force of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, the negotiations of which at that time were still ongoing. During the implementation of the European integration strategy of Ukraine, a number of state programs in this area were approved and implemented. Thus, by the Decree of the President of Ukraine of 2003 "On State Programs on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine for 2004-2007", the State Program of Training, Retraining and Upgrading of Specialists in the Area of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine for 2004-2007 was approved, as well as the State Program of Informing the Public on European Integration of Ukraine for 2004-2007. After the expiration of their term, they were continued and acted in accordance with the new conditions [10, p. 235 - 236]. As an innovation and educational mechanism in 2013, the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the concept of implementation of the state policy in the field of informing and establishing communication with the public on topical issues of European integration of Ukraine for the period until 2017 [10, p. 237].

Within the above given classification, raising the level of English language competence of civil servants is a mechanism of personnel changes in the civil service of Ukraine, as it leads to qualitative changes in the personnel composition of the civil service, increasing their professionalism (evidenced by the experience of Bulgaria as previously described). The researchers note that in the field of education and professional qualification, the Ukraine-EU cooperation mechanisms are further improving the system of higher education

and the system of training specialists in Ukraine in accordance with modern requirements, including the system of certification of higher educational institutions and diplomas on higher education; improvement of vocational training of heads of state and private sector enterprises and civil servants in priority sectors [11, p. 249]. The professionalization of public administration in the sphere of European integration of Ukraine requires thorough fundamental training of civil servants, continuous improvement of their qualifications, accumulation of managerial and professional experience [11, p. 407].

The need to increase the level of professionalism of civil servants for the successful European integration of Ukraine was also proved by international research. In 2002-2003, the Main Department of the Civil Service of Ukraine and the World Bank conducted a first assessment of the civil service and state governance system using the criteria of the basic assessment of SIGMA to identify the existing gaps between current practice in Ukraine and the expected standards in the EU. The assessment was carried out by foreign and domestic experts according to the questionnaire developed within the framework of the SIGMA project after 1999 through interviews with the governing body of authorities, institutions and organizations involved in the development, analysis and implementation of measures for the establishment and development of the public administration system and its personnel support. In the process of evaluation, almost 560 legal acts regulating the organization and conducting of civil service were investigated. The Civil Service Assessment Team noted that Ukraine made significant progress in the development of the civil service system, and in the medium term it would be able to meet the European standards that are defined for the European Union system based on SIGMA indicators. In most of the six key areas that were the subject of the annual assessment of the civil service resource held by the European Union in the accession countries, Ukraine could achieve minimum standards or indicators in the medium term. The main problem issues were the stability of the corps of civil servants, their professionalism. This could be solved provided that necessary investments were made in the devel-

opment of the human resource and with the help of creation of a powerful horizontal infrastructure for managing the process of European integration throughout the system of public bodies (Assessment of civil service and public administration system using the criteria of the basic assessment of SIGMA) [12, p.34].

In addition, the English language competence of civil servants of Ukraine may be conditionally related to informational and educational mechanisms of European integration if we are talking about the creation of a single information field not only within the country but also in the Ukraine-EU plane, which will promote more effective interpersonal communication between civil servants of Ukraine and the EU, will reduce the risk of misunderstanding or inaccurate interpretation of what is spoken or written in both languages in official and non-official documents and messages; will increase the mobility of civil servants, and thus the obtaining of information from the primary sources, without any third-party interpretation or assistance, contributing to a faster and more efficient solution of issues that arise in the process of cooperation.

**As conclusion**, we should note that English language competence perfectly fits within the mechanisms of state governance and European integration, acting as a means, source and prerequisite of successful europeanization of Ukraine and Ukraine-EU collaboration. All-in-all, English language competence may be considered as a personnel-related and informational-educational mechanism of European integration. It is of great importance for Ukrainian civil servants under the modern conditions of high professional mobility and constant inter-personal communication, present among state officers of EU member-states, when English is used as “lingua franca” for discussing common issues and national interests. Development of English language competence and its improvement among civil servants of Ukraine will contribute to their work with colleagues from EU member-countries on high level, will make communication more efficient and clear, will improve Ukrainian civil service prestige. It will ruin the existing language barrier and bring us to a single conceptual basis. Moreover, English language competence, as a complex unity, will bring a better

inter-cultural understanding and higher tolerance, supporting the democratic principles of state's development.

It is obvious that more attention should be paid to English language competence of civil servants of Ukraine. Possible concrete results of this could be:

- normative acts, with concrete requirements towards the level of English language competence for separate categories of civil

servant, as well as written bonuses (career development, rewards) for civil servants with high results of English language mastering and usage in professional activity;

- special training and retraining programs, developed in systems of higher education and professional retraining;
- general policy towards multilingualism in general and higher education.

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