

## THE PECULIARITIES OF HYBRID INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION OF POLITICAL SYSTEM OF UKRAINE

### Summary

*The aim* of this research is to study the peculiarities of hybrid institutionalization in the context of prospects for further democratization of political system in Ukraine.

*The tasks* of the research are to clarify the concept of democratization, to distinguish it from such terms as institutionalization and transformation; to establish the criteria for differentiating between hybrid and democratic institutionalization; to define the opportunities for the Ukrainian political system to get out of the institutional trap.

*The results* of the research testify to the hybrid nature of the political regime and institutional changes, contradictions between formal and informal institutions that obstruct democratization of the political system, highlight the prospects for institutionalization of democratic institutions by providing alternatives or assigning formal characteristics to authoritarian practices.

*Keywords:* political institute, democratization, political system, institutionalization of democracy, transformation of the political system, hybrid regime.

## SZCZEGÓLNOŚCI INSTYTUCJONALIZACJI HYBRYDOWEJ I PERSPEKTYWY DEMOKRATYZACJI SYSTEMU POLITYCZNEGO UKRAINY

### Streszczenie

*Celem* tych badań jest zbadanie osobliwości hybrydowej instytucjonalizacji w kontekście perspektyw dalszej demokratyzacji systemu politycznego na Ukrainie.

Do *zadań* badawczych należy wyjaśnienie pojęcia demokratyzacji, odróżnienie go od takich terminów, jak instytucjonalizacja i transformacja; ustanowienie kryteriów rozróżnienia między hybrydową i demokratyczną instytucjonalizacją; określić możliwości wyjścia ukraińskiego systemu politycznego z instytucjonalnej pułapki.

*Wyniki* badań świadczą o hybrydowym charakterze reżimu politycznego i zmianach instytucjonalnych, sprzeczności między instytucjami formalnymi i nieformalnymi, które utrudniają demokratyzację systemu politycznego, podkreślają perspektywy instytucjonalizacji

instytucji demokratycznych poprzez zapewnienie alternatyw lub przypisanie formalnych cech praktykom autorytarnym.

*Słowa kluczowe: instytucja polityczna, demokratyzacja, system polityczny, instytucjonalizacja demokracji, transformacja systemu politycznego, reżim hybrydowy.*

The peculiarities of transition processes in the post-Soviet states have posed a number of new challenges to researchers. One of the most urgent among them is to find ways to avoid regime hybridity and consolidate democracy in the current state of affairs. At the same time, application of the traditional transitological methodology is not effective enough to explain the tendencies, directions and features of institutional changes in the countries of Eastern Europe, since the transitional nature of the political system is becoming sustainable. This makes it necessary to consider a political regime that combines the features of authoritarianism and democracy not as a temporary form, but as a new specific variety.

Some contradictions in the democratization of the political institutions of the post-Soviet states may be explained applying the theoretical tenets of neo-institutionalism. In particular, the problems of dynamics and peculiarities of institutional changes have been studied by S. Levitsky, W. Merkel., and A. Croissant<sup>1</sup>, R. Putnam<sup>2</sup>, and G. Helmke<sup>3</sup>. They describe the mechanism for affirming the hybrid nature of the political regime by stabilizing the combination of formal democratic institutions and informal authoritarian practices.

The phenomenon of stabilization of the hybrid regime, which prevents political institutions from further democratization, has not bypassed Ukraine. Its mechanism and peculiarities have been described in details by Ukrainian researchers, namely K. Lavrenova<sup>4</sup>, Y. Matsievsky<sup>5</sup>, O. Stoyko<sup>6</sup> and other.

However, the issue of effective interaction and co-operation between the formal and informal institutions in the process of democratization of the political system remains open to discussion, which makes the topic of this paper relevant to the current state of affairs.

First of all, it is necessary to identify and clarify the basic concepts of the study in order to avoid terminological ambiguity. Thus, the notions of institutionalization, democratization, transformation, transit, and transition of the political system are used simultaneously to refer to the process of institutional changes. However, it is necessary to mention that the term 'transformation' encompasses the whole process of social movement, changes of various character<sup>7</sup>. The notion of

<sup>1</sup> Merkel' V., Croissant A. *Formal'nyye i neformal'nyye instituty v defektnykh demokratiyakh* (I) 'Polis'. 2002. № 1. s. 6–17.

<sup>2</sup> Putnam R. *Tvorenniya demokratii: Triaditsiyi bromadyans'koyi aktyvnosti v suchasniy Italii*, 2001. 348 s.

<sup>3</sup> Helmke G., Levitsky S. *Neformal'nyye instituty i sravnitel'naya politika: osnovnyye napravleniya issledovaniy*. 'Prognosis'. 2007. № 2. S. 188–211.

<sup>4</sup> Lavrenova K.O. *Osoblyvosti rozvytku hibrydnobo politychnobo rezhymu v umovakh demokratyzatsiyi*. 2017. 279s.

<sup>5</sup> Matsiyevskyy YU.V. *U pastsi hibrydnosti: zlyzchay transformatsiyi politychnobo rezhymu v Ukraini (1991–2014): monografiya*, 2016. 345 s.

<sup>6</sup> Stoiko O. M. *Transformatsiya politychnykh institutiv u suchasnykh perekhidnykh suspil'stvakh*, 2016. 416 s.

<sup>7</sup> Novakova O. V. *Politychna modernizatsiya ta rozvytok demokratychnykh protsesiv v suchasniy Ukraini*, 2006. 216 s.

‘transit’ or ‘transition’ contains the connotation of ‘final destination’<sup>8</sup>. The term ‘institutionalization’ encompasses establishment of both democratic and authoritarian or mixed institutions. Whereas democratization is a continuous and endless process of improving democratic institutions that takes place not only in the transitional states but also in the countries with traditional democracy.

As a consequence, researchers of democratic transitional processes face the problem of differentiating dynamics of hybrid and stable institutions, as well as incomplete democratic institutionalization and a stable mixed political regime.

We are convinced that the difference between hybrid and democratic dynamics of political institutions lies in the facade nature of the former and the ability of the latter to reproduce itself, to adapt to new challenges by gradually changing particular functions of political institutions, while preserving characteristics and peculiarities of a system as a whole. The main criterion for differentiation between democratic and hybrid institutionalization is the unity or controversy of formal norms and informal attitudes (‘rules of the game’).

The theoretical substantiation for the *first* thesis is the methodology of neo-institutionalism. Thus, J. March and J. Olsen define an institution as a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are invariant to individuals and at the same time resilient to changing external circumstances as well as to preferences and expectations of citizens, or, in other words, “a collection of norms, rules and patterns of behavior that define appropriate actions in terms of relations between roles and situations, possess a certain repertoire of procedures”<sup>9</sup>.

Summarizing various definitions, we can conclude that a political institution is an organization, a norm, a rule, and a mechanism for its implementation at the same time. In fact, all of these components describe the structure of a political institution, which is important for understanding the efficiency of political institutions. Thus, all its structural elements have to work in complex and increase the influence of each other. Otherwise, even the most democratic political institutions are not able to implement the principles of democracy into political practice or to shape democratic beliefs, values and norms of citizens’ behavior. It is absolutely clear that similar political institutions differ significantly depending on the form of government.

Therefore, in our opinion, it is appropriate to define a political institution as a system of organizations, rules and incentives that are intended to regulate political life and shape the behavior of political subjects.

In conditions of democracy, political stability is rather volatile because of a change in configurations of actors and their strategies. However, due to the established formal institutions and procedures and the consent of all policy makers to abide by the ‘rules of the game’ they have set,

<sup>8</sup> Kolodiy A. F. *Na shlyakhu do bromadyans’koho suspilstva: Teoretychni zasady y sotsiokulturni peredumovy demokratychnoyi transformatsiyi v Ukraini*, 2002. - s. 85, Romanyuk O. I. «Kinets> tranzytolohiyi» chy kryza yiyi pervymyoi paradyhmy? Polit. Menedzhment. 2007. № 2. S. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Olson, V. 2000. *Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist dictatorships*. - New York: Basic books. p. 21–22

the political system is capable of self-regulation. It is the ability to reproduce a political system applying democratic methods that promotes successful transition to democracy.

At the same time, a hybrid political system is not able to ensure adaptation to external challenges. It becomes significant in times of crisis in society. The system begins to gravitate towards authoritarianism, leading to aggravation of the situation, escalation of social conflicts, and social explosion in the form of mass actions of civil disobedience.

The differences between hybrid and democratic institutionalization stem from the peculiarities of the hybrid political regime. Representatives of neo-institutionalism believe that a democratic system is characterized by dominance of formal institutions and indicates readiness of major society groups to follow universal norms and rules that are common to all. On the contrary, predominance of informal institutions based on particularistic norms and rules, most often such as clientelism and corruption, testifies to democratic deficit.

In the field of political life, both formal and informal institutions are essential, especially under the conditions of transitional political regime. This is due to their peculiarities and functions. *Formal* institutions are based on clear principles (legal acts, laws, decrees, regulations, instructions), perform managerial and supervisory functions on the basis of sanctions related to promotion and punishment (administrative and criminal). Such institutions include the state and its bodies, the army, etc.

*Informal* institutions operate on the basis of norms consolidated in public opinion, traditions, and customs. These include various cultural and social foundations, interest groups, etc. Informal institutions are quite enduring and change gradually and slowly. They may be created in the process of evolution on the basis of interaction between major policy makers. G. Helmke and S. Levitsky define informal institutions as accepted in society, usually unwritten rules that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels<sup>10</sup>.

However, in the context of a transitional political system, attention should be paid to the fact that adoption of informal practices leads to formation of a hybrid regime, since informal institutions are mostly authoritarian. They emerged due to the inefficiency of official democratic institutions resulting from evolution of institutions under undemocratic regime, and become a kind of alternative to formal structures compensating for their weakness. In this regard, old informal institutions conflict with the newly created institutions reducing their efficiency. As a consequence, the process of institutional adaptation is complicated, institutions are partially destroyed immediately after their establishment, and institutional reforms fail. "A large group of such countries is characterized by a dense interweaving of clientelist and personalist networks, corruption and lobbying within the state system"<sup>11</sup>.

Similar substitution of formal and democratically legitimized institutions with informal rules of political activity can be performed both from above and from below in a society. Deformalization of institutions develops from above, when the executive elected in a democratic way extends

<sup>10</sup> Helmke G., Levitsky S. *Neformal'nyye instituty i sravnitel'naya politika : osnovnyye napravleniya issledovaniy*. Prognosis. 2007. № 2. S. 28.

<sup>11</sup> Lavrenova K.O. *Osoblyvosti rozvytku hibrydnoho politychnoho rezhymu v umovakh demokratyzatsiyi*. 2017. 279 s.

its prerogatives as a result of constitutional restraints and balances. If a weak civil society with insufficiently accumulated 'social capital' but with a high potential for conflict, mutual mistrust and systematic spread of corruption and traditions of clientelism neglects the institutional rules, deprives the institutions of their influence or 'colonizes' them in its private or corporate interests, the process develops from below. Moreover, lack of social and political trust, which is manifested primarily in the decline of real electoral participation, extends to other institutions of civil society, such as parties, trade unions, and public organizations. It leads to mutual distrust among citizens (mostly in case of their belonging to different social and cultural layers), etc.

This political and institutional differentiation is not only theoretical. In practice, informal restrictions from above are often interwoven with those that appear from below and vice versa. This interweaving may result in various types of defective democratic regimes in which ruling class groups co-exist with segments of society through informal but enduring clientelist relations. Constitutionally defined mechanisms of representation become exhausted and partially or temporarily decline. In this case, deformation of political decision-making deprives people of their sovereignty guaranteed by civic representation.

According to G. O'Donnell, widespread corruption in any state system is a consequence of integrating informal, often clientelist structures of elite groups into formal institutions of executive, legislative and judicial power<sup>12</sup>. As a result of this incorporation of informal principles into formal rules, constitutionally legitimized institutions are either limited in favor of profit maximization strategies for individuals or elite cartels, or become completely powerless. In this case, political leaders are exempted from both horizontal democratic and legal constitutional control.

W. Merkel and A. Croissant suggest that in the medium and long term, such survival at the expense of informal institutionalization promoting corruption and personal abuse of power has a negative impact on consolidation of new democracies and the ability to reform hybrid regimes<sup>13</sup>. Moreover, such practices restrain the fundamental democratic principles of formally equal chances for political representation of social interests, since the actors who possess the extralegal resources necessary to stabilize informal mechanisms and networks, gain a privileged access to political power and formal institutions.

However, we agree with K. Lavrenova's conclusion that hybrid regimes operate not contrary to, but due to a combination of democratic and authoritarian institutions and a combination of both formal and informal incentives and restrictions of their interaction<sup>14</sup>. In this context, the concept of dual institutionalization, suggested by E. Golovakha and N. Panina, is worth attention. According to it, co-existence of old and new institutions is a stabilizing factor in a transitional society<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> O'Donnell G. *Delegativnaya demokratiya*. 'Predely vlasti', 1997. №2-3. 28-34.

<sup>13</sup> Merkel' V., Croissant A. *Formal'nyye i neformal'nyye instituty v defektnykh demokratiyakh* (1) 'Polis', 2002. № 1. s. 25.

<sup>14</sup> Lavrenova K.O. *Osoblyvosti rozvytku hibrydnoho politychnoho rezhymu v umovakh demokratyzatsiyi*. 2017. 279 s.

<sup>15</sup> Holovakha YE., Panina N. *Ukrayins'ke suspil'stvo 1992-2008: Sotsiolohichnyy monitoryng*, 2008. 580 s.

E. Golovakha also points out that old institutions may not be involved for a long time and acquire legitimacy only when legalized new institutions become ineffective. A striking example of this process is the Ukrainian reality, where the institutions of the Soviet society have lost their legal status but have not lost their traditional legitimacy – people’s support of the ideology of state paternalism, preservation of state ownership of large enterprises, socialist benefits for the population, and privileges for the ruling elite, etc. At the same time, the illegal (shadow) institutions of the Soviet society – shadow market, ‘backstairs influence’ and corruption, organized crime, double morality – were transformed into legal institutions of a transitional society, but did not acquire proper legitimacy due to their mass perception as ‘legalized lawlessness.’ Thus, the source of reproduction of informal authoritarian institutions is legitimacy in the mass consciousness.

In addition, informal institutions are difficult to unambiguously separate and differentiate from formal institutions, since they may be state-formed and not always related to political culture, may develop as parallel structures, or function within official bodies.

We are also convinced that informal institutions are able to positively influence the processes of democratization of transitional political systems. Thus, “informal institutions (coalition presidentialism, public disobedience) may improve the quality of democracy by serving as a functional equivalent of formal channels of participation”<sup>16</sup>.

This thesis may be proved by such distinctive features of informal institutions as lack of coercion in regulation of social relations, and natural character of their formation. Due to these features, informal institutions become a mechanism for overcoming inefficiency of formal institutions in a state, regulatory inflation, and a deficit of national values.

To some extent, existence of informal rules is objective, since legal norms cannot describe all possible variants of social and political practice.

Also, it is often the informal institutions that are the basis of democratic transformations, the bearer of progressive actions that require changes of official institutions. Thus, most revolutionary actions begin with the activities of underground organizations, for example, the foundations of Soviet authoritarianism were shaken by the activities of the Sixtiers, human rights activists, and civil disobedience actions that had no official status.

Countries with the so-called ‘unwritten’ constitutions may be a good example of positive influence of informal institutions on the democratization process. Formation of their political systems was based on informal institutions – customary law, political traditions, court precedents, and arrangements that subsequently acquired official status.

It is necessary to mention the fact that many informal institutions are created on the basis of traditions, customs, and developed from actual political practice, therefore having a natural character. This is how transition to democracy in Western Europe took place. However, the values of democracy in Western European countries have been formed for centuries. That is why it is obvious that they cannot be established in a transitional state for a short period of time.

<sup>16</sup> Stoiko O. M. *Transformatsiya politychnykh institutiv u suchasnykh perekhidnykh suspil'stvakh*, 2016 S 344.

Finally, despite the length and complexity of informal institutionalization in comparison to formal establishment of democracy, informal rules and institutions are more enduring. They ensure the continuity of political development, transform democratic methods and rules of political play into the internal set of beliefs of all participants in the political process, that is considered as one of possible options for achieving the goals. Therefore, it takes time and the will of the political elite to establish democratic informal institutions that will yield results, but in the long run.

In other words, it is absolutely wrong to identify informal institutions with authoritarianism or an obstruction of democratization. This may be explained by their objective nature, flexibility and the ability to influence the behavior of major political actors in a mild, subconscious way.

At the same time, the practice of the post-Soviet states is based on the contradiction between formal and informal institutions. In transitional political systems, institutional uncertainty leads to a lack of citizens' confidence in new institutions, and discredits democratic values. It is "firstly, the authoritarian legacy of informal practices and, secondly, accumulation of economic and political problems of the post-undemocratic system transferred from the authoritarian phase"<sup>17</sup> that deepen the process of delegitimizing the institutions of democracy.

We suggest that the nature of the influence of informal institutions on the process of democratization is also considerably dependent on their interaction with the formal ones, as well as on the extent to which the areas of influence exerted by formal and informal institutions overlap. As some researchers believe, "informal structures influence the performance of formal institutions in a significant and often unexpected way"<sup>18</sup>. Thus, the informal rules of interaction between the legislative and executive power often encourage the president to exceed his or her powers. However, there are cases where the head of state in a presidential republic, due to unwritten rules, does not apply all the levers of influence determined by the constitution (the USA, Chile).

To analyze the nature of interaction between formal and informal institutions, it is advisable to use typologization suggested by G. Helmke and S. Levitsky, where four types of informal institutions are identified: complementary, accommodative, competing and substitutive<sup>19</sup>. Complementary institutions exist where formal institutions are not available or used in someone's personal interests. They often increase the effectiveness of formal institutions by enhancing motivation for subordination. An example of this is templates and working instructions interacting with bureaucratic structures.

Substitutive institutions compensate for the inefficiency or weakness of formal institutions, allowing them to overcome regulatory inflation.

<sup>17</sup> Lavrenova K.O. *Osoblyvosti rozvytku hibrydnogo politychnoho rezhymu v umovakh demokratyzatsiyi*. 2017. 279 s.

<sup>18</sup> Stoiko O.M. *Transformatsiya politychnykh institutiv u suchasnykh perekhidnykh suspil'stvakh*, 2016.S 344.

<sup>19</sup> Helmke G., Levitsky S. *Neformal'nyye instituty i sravnitel'naya politika: osnovnyye napravleniya issledovaniy*. 'Prognosis'. 2007. № 2. S. 28.

Accommodative informal institutions change the consequences of complying with official rules without openly violating them. They do not contribute to the effectiveness of formal institutions, but stabilize them because they prevent demands for changes in formal institutions.

Competing informal rules co-exist with the formal ones allowing to bend or ignore the latter. The main obstruction of democratization in the post-Soviet political systems is, for the most part, competing informal institutions such as corruption, patrimonialism, and clientelism. Their positive role is that they testify to the systemic crisis of certain official institutions and indicate the need for their reform.

The classification mentioned above has been introduced into this research due to the necessity to identify the role of various informal institutions in democratization of the Ukrainian political system. Such an analysis will help outline the ways of institutional reform (granting formal status to informal institutions, improving formal institutions, or creating an alternative to destructive informal rules).

The best way of interaction between formal and informal institutions is when the latter create or enhance the motivation for subordination to the former. Ultimately, the contradictions between formal and informal institutions facilitate creation of new formal institutions that are more related to informal practices and the interests of significant actors<sup>20</sup>.

Let us illustrate the obtained results with some examples from the Ukrainian political practice. Political stability in Ukraine is situational in nature (e.g. formation of majority coalitions). Instead, dynamics of political institutions are only superficial in nature and do not affect real changes in the political system.

There has been a fluctuation between authoritarianism and democracy throughout the years of independence. At the same time, formal demonstrative intensification of democratic transformations took place under the public pressure and was accompanied by actions of civil disobedience. But introduction of new amendments to the legislation on behalf or at the initiative of the people was aimed at introducing additional restrictions for 'weak' players in order to reduce the risk of losing elections and increase electoral victory. It destabilizes the institutional system of collective management and legitimization of the government.

Under such conditions, authoritarian informal rules exert considerable influence both outside the formal institutions (financial industrial groups) and inside them ('party of power'). As a consequence, formal institutions simply become the facade of informal institutions, legitimizing power. In this way, a hybrid type of political regime is approved and stabilized.

The conflict potential of Ukrainian society also proves the controversy of formal and informal institutions, since in the broader context they represent a confrontation between old and new values, a gap between the formally proclaimed rights and the possibilities for their realization.

<sup>20</sup> Merkel V., Croissan A. *Formal'nyye i neformal'nyye instituty v defektnykh demokratiyakh* (I) 'Polis'. 2002. № 1. s. 25.



Dominance of authoritarian informal institutionalization, that contradicts the principles of democratic institutions and promotes their inefficiency, may be revealed by a lack of stable majority in the parliament, constant changes in the structure of the governing coalition and electoral legislation, as well as inefficient party structuring that results only in changing party names, but not in substituting their members.

Thus, following the constitutional reforms, the status of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has been repeatedly changed in order to find an optimal model of interest representation. There are some cases in the history of Ukraine, when creation of parliamentary coalitions distorted the will of voters, and the coalitions themselves were situational in their nature and quickly disintegrated.

However, prevalence of informal authoritarian practices has always led to gradual decline of democratic reforms. Institutionalization of a political system may pass through the following cycles. The 1<sup>st</sup> cycle may be called neo-patrimonial. Its beginning may be traced back to the collapse of the Soviet authoritarianism following students' actions. It is connected with population's disappointment in the democratic values caused by deterioration of the social and economic situation, dishonest privatization, concentration of power in the President's hands.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>, oligarchic, cycle relates to 'Ukraine without Kuchma' actions, attempts to carry out constitutional reforms that were never implemented and gradual subsidence of revolutionary sentiment.

The 3<sup>rd</sup>, clientelist, cycle began with Kuchma's authoritarianism losing its power after 'the Orange Revolution.' The ideals of 'the Orange Revolution' were never implemented because of the lack of consensus among the ruling elites and the struggle for power that led to V. Yanukovich's victory in the presidential election. The parliamentary majority was formed by the pro-presidential political force.

Finally, the 4<sup>th</sup>, populist, cycle began with the events connected with 'the Revolution of Dignity' in 2013-2014. Currently, as well as it has been for the last years, informal political institutions are competitive with formal ones. Thus, the institution of separation of powers is inefficient because of the dualism of the executive branch, and is leveled by the clientelist method of interaction among the political elites. People's power is degenerating into populism. Parliamentarism is facing destructive actions by the opposition (the latter still has no formal status in Ukraine). Political participation is facing the problem of state paternalism. Pluralism leads only to disintegration and conflict. That is, the distance between formal and informal institutions remains. It is characterized by interaction of 'public' and 'shadow', declared and hidden interests, as well as formal and informal functional manifestations.

The new government did not demonstrate a tendency to adhere to formal democratic rules and procedures, first of all, in restoring the parliamentary-presidential form of republic according to the Law of the Verkhovna Rada on declaring the Constitutional Court decision of 2010 invalid and reinstating the Constitution adopted in 2004. After all, neither the Constitution of Ukraine,

nor the constitutional practice presumes any instructions for such mechanisms for amending the Basic Law. This provides reasons to consider the constitutional process incomplete and the Constitution – illegitimate, giving ground to further disputes over its validity.

At the same time, restoration of the parliamentary-presidential form of government does not exclude the dualism of the executive power. As before, constitutional norms enable the head of state and the parliament to ‘share’ the executive power, leaving just a few administrative tools for the government. In such circumstances, it becomes a problem to maintain stability and efficiency of the executive branch, in particular, and the state as a whole. There are constant disputes over further amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine. Since a consolidated version of the Constitution was not drafted, the Constitutional reform was delayed for an indefinite period of time. Till present, a situational balance has been reached to satisfy the major political actors, but this has not ruled out the threat of reproducing conflict environment in the relationships between the president, parliament and government. Therefore, the issue of amendments to the Constitution will be raised again in the course of election rhetoric and the struggle for influence on the government.

The elections in 2019 showed nihilism of the citizens regarding the whole system of government brought to absurdity. Weariness of institutional uncertainty in Ukraine leads to increase in the role of populism as a mechanism for legitimizing and exercising political power. Rapid development of the media, mostly their networks, intensifies the populist tendencies in modern politics. M. Rozumny fairly points out: “As a consequence of such approaches, new political projects emerge on the basis of network, ‘viral’ and other mobilization technologies, financed by the alternative, including external, sources. Advertisements of party brands are becoming more aggressive, figures of party leaders – more effective, and the environment of ‘party activists’ – more professional, acquiring signs of corporate secrecy”<sup>21</sup>.

In general, the obtained conclusions outline possible strategies for getting out of the institutional trap and promoting further democratization. First of all, it is advisable to search for the strategies of replacing competing informal institutions with their formal alternatives, to institutionalize by dislodging informal institutions, and to change institutional character from authoritarian to democratic.

According to G. Helmke and S. Levitsky, the factors of evolution of informal institutions are the following:

- firstly, changes in the structure of formal institutions that will help overcome regulatory uncertainty in case of complementary informal institutions, increase the efficiency of formal institutions in case of competing informal institutions that aren’t able to survive competition, and subordination to them is becoming disadvantageous to policy makers;
- secondly, weakening of actors who defend certain informal institutions, for instance, increasing the number of middle class electorate, destroys the basis of clientelism by reducing voters’ dependence on material goods;

<sup>21</sup> Rozumny M. M. *Vskykyky natsional'noho samovyznachenmya*. 2016. – S. 87.

- thirdly, gradual decay of authoritarian informal institutions will be intensified by the change in values of the vast majority of population, which is explained by the lack of loyalty to the old authoritarian practices<sup>22</sup>.

In the context of Ukrainian realities, the first factor can be realized through introducing details and their regulatory approval in many democratic procedures, including distribution of powers between representative and executive bodies, the right of legislative initiative, dissolution of the parliament, exercising the right to veto, the structure and size of presidential administration as well as other advisory bodies, formation of parliamentary coalitions and interaction between parliamentary groups, reaching coalition agreements, defining the operation rules for the parliament of certain convocation, holding debates, discipline within party factions, achieving parity between professionalism and periodic changing, party representation of state employees. The key issues of creating an alternative to authoritarian practices are development of local self-government institutions, sanctioned lobbying, and independent media.

Also, important foundations for democratization include the ability of civil society institutions to decentralize powers, facilitate exercising managerial functions and ensure interrelation between public authorities and the public, public control, and conventional forms of political participation.

The need for Ukrainians to change their value orientations is manifested by the fact that the efficiency of political institutions is based on the consent of people to live in such an institutional space, where both old and new institutions operate, providing, due to their contradictory co-existence, with all the institutionalization attributes that are necessary for social integration and stability. This thesis is supported by the results of various studies. For example, in 2019, 44% of the citizens partially or fully justify corruption. 25.5% of the citizens admitted to giving a bribe for the last year. The reasons for such actions, mentioned by the respondents, included both hints from representatives of certain structures and their own initiative, driven by their confidence in achieving results faster and easier<sup>23</sup>.

That is, a high level of corruption is caused by a loyal attitude to this phenomenon, a habit, or even misunderstanding of what exactly should be considered a bribe. As a result, the fight against corruption is reduced to claims and scrutiny of small-scale officials, neglecting its real scope. Undoubtedly, in such circumstances, any institutional methods of dealing with this phenomenon are doomed to fail. However, setting up alternative private administrative service centers can turn bribery into a costly and pointless procedure.

Another effective strategy for further democratization is the process of isomorphism, which requires intensification of interaction among organizations, emergence of inter-organizational structures (unions, associations of organizations), increase in the level of information load on

<sup>22</sup> Helmke G., Levitsky S. *Neformal'nyye instituty i sravnitel'naya politika: osnovnyye napravleniya issledovaniya*. 'Prognosis'. 2007. № 2. S. 28.

<sup>23</sup> *Doslidzhennya u sferi koruptsiyi: osnovni rezul'taty i rekomendatsiyi*. TSPPR. 2019. <http://www.pravo.org.ua/ua/news/20873580-doslidzheniya-u-sferi-koruptsiyi-osnovni-rezultati-i-rekomendatsiyi>

organizations, identification of organization itself as part of organizational field, which promotes their active interaction with other organizations. At the same time, isomorphism can be carried out either by pressure from other institutions-organizations or by problems with legitimacy, as well as by following the models of successful institutions, by professionalization, when, in order to increase their efficiency, institutions-organizations prefer to increase specialization in a certain field.

## Conclusions

Thus, the notion of transformation should be distinguished from the notions of democratization and institutionalization, since their identification leads to wrong evaluation of the current state of affairs in a political system. Transformation involves some completion of the process of institutional change, and institutionalization does not always entail establishment of democratic institutions. Democratization, on the other hand, is a continuous process of development of political institutions in order to establish theoretical principles and values of democracy in the process of adapting the political system to new circumstances and challenges of the external environment. That is why, we believe that Ukrainian political system is in urgent need of democratization, but hybrid institutionalization is a major obstacle on its way. Analysis of Ukrainian contemporary history reveals establishment of a hybrid regime characterized by a combination of formal democratic institutions and informal ones.

Institutionalization in Ukraine has already been completed, but it has a non-democratic hybrid character, as informal institutionalization of authoritarian practices prevails, and institutions that have become sustainable do not meet the requirements of the dynamic type of stability of the political system, do not facilitate its adaptation and do not change the conditions for the society's existence.

Nowadays, informal institutions and relations prevail over formal ones and affirm authoritarian practices obstructing democratization of political system in Ukraine. This may be explained by weakness of democratic institutions, instability of legislation, regulatory deficit, inability of ordinary citizens to comprehend the essence and values of democracy. In general, informal institutions arise objectively as a result of interaction between policy-makers, so, it is worth searching for ways of their constructive interrelation with formal rules.

Therefore, political research should involve such an important aspect as the search for mechanisms of purposeful influence on the transformation of political institutions to ensure dynamic stability, constant self-development and self-improvement of democratic institutions in terms of their informal procedures, to provide official status for democratic informal institutions and create a legal alternative to authoritarian informal practices that will make the latter decay.

The peculiarity of hybrid institutionalization is the constant change in the formal characteristics of political institutions, which creates the likelihood of transformational processes, but does not change the fundamentally mixed nature of the political regime. It is carried out in

favour of stronger actors who seek to consolidate their position or legitimize specific political decisions. At the same time, hybrid institutionalization is capable of ensuring only the situational balance of the political system, but does not ensure the natural evolution of relations and processes.

It is also important to adhere to a broad definition of a political institution that allows understanding it as an organization, norm and process of its implementation at the same time. This approach proves that it is impossible to establish democratic values and patterns of behavior under the conditions of hybrid institutionalization.

The issue of further democratization of the political system in Ukraine implies its removal from the state of hybrid stability, characterized by a constant change in the formal characteristics and characteristics of the political system maintaining the leading role of informal institutions and procedures that do not lead to real institutional changes, despite the inefficiency of the whole institutional system.

Thus, the priority of the current institutionalization of democracy is the implementation of reforms aimed at ensuring co-operation between formal and informal institutions. In other words, it is necessary to create conditions under which existing informal institutions will have to act in the legal field and use democratic methods of influence on the government. In this regard, perspective measures to be taken should encompass adoption of laws "On Lobbyism" and "On Opposition", establishing effective communication links between the elite and the masses, awareness-raising activities to enhance the political culture of citizens, officials and political elite.