

ПОЛІТИЧНІ НАУКИ

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FEATURES OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS IN THE DONETSK REGION AFTER 2014

Attention is paid to the features of political process in the Donetsk region after the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine and the beginning of hostilities in eastern Ukraine. The main components of the political process were analyzed. In particular, the statutory documents of political parties were considered, the results of all-Ukrainian and local elections were analyzed, and public organizations were characterized. The author concluded that regional economic and socio-political conditions have led to a general pluralization of the political system. This manifested itself in the appearing of new parties in the region, the fall rating of left-wing parties and the reformatting principle of forming the political sympathies of citizens. The growth of public interest in politics has become relevant.

Key words: *political process, elections, parties, party process, electorate, public organizations.*

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Since the spring of 2014, Ukraine has been in a difficult socio-economic and political position. This is primarily due internal political instability in which country found itself during the presidency of Viktor Yanukovich (2010-2014). The refusal of the Ukrainian government to sign an association agreement with the European Union (EU) in 2013 was the starting point of significant events that continue to this day. Rallies, protests, demonstrations were a natural response of the population to the rejection of association with the EU, that grew into a Revolution of Dignity, which in turn led to collapse of the government of President Viktor Yanukovich. The Russian Federation took advantage of political instability, resulting in the occupation of the Crimea and support separatist movements in eastern Ukraine. The intensification of separatist sentiment in Eastern Ukraine has led to the seizure of regional and local police departments in order to seize firearms, prepare and hold a pseudo-referendum, and eventually separate the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts from Ukraine. As a result, on April 6, 2014, a regime of Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) was introduced in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. This operation was aimed at returning the territories under the control of Ukraine. On April 30, 2018, the ATO regime was changed to the Joint Forces Operation (JFO) regime. The main differences between the JFO and the ATO regime were the transfer of command of the operation from the the Ukrainian Security Service (SSU) to the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The result of the military conflict, and eventually the hybrid war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, was numerous human and economic losses, occupation of part of Donetsk and Luhansk regions by armed rebel groups (mostly supporters of the unrecognized Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics). A

demarcation line appeared, which established a buffer zone between the Ukrainian-controlled settlements and the temporarily occupied territories. This has led to the severance of economic ties within the region and the establishment of barriers to the movement of people, goods and services, as well as the outflow of population and capital from the region (Грідіна та Булик, 2019).

Peculiarities of the political process in the Donetsk region are primarily related to the characteristics of social, demographic and economic development. First of all, it is the geographical location, economy and structure of the electorate. The borders of the Donetsk region in the east partially coincide with the state borders of Ukraine along the Rostov region of the Russian Federation. That is, the proximity to the borders with Russia has made its adjustments in the attitude of the population to the neighboring state. Within the Donetsk region a large industrial complex with a high concentration of heavy industries has been formed. As of August 1, 2019, 4.1 million people live in the Donetsk region, almost 10% of the population of Ukraine lives here (Державна служба статистики України, 2020). In addition to Ukrainians, who make up 56.9% of the total population of the region, Russians (38.2%), Greeks, Jews, Bulgarians and representatives of other nations live in the Donetsk region. The population structure is characterized by the predominance of women (55%) in the total population and shows signs of aging. Among the total number of women, 32% are women over 60 and 32% under 35. Among men, 45% are under the age of 35 and only 21% are over the age of 60 (Державна служба статистики України, 2020). The professional structure of the population of Donetsk region is connected first of all with the quantitative predominance of the urban population over the rural population, workers of large enterprises over the people engaged in agriculture and intellectual work.

Geographical proximity of the Donetsk region to the borders of the Russian Federation, the spread of the Russian language in communication, the professional structure of the population were one of the reasons for the strengthening of negative opposition to the whole of Ukraine. This was due to the popularity of leftist slogans and the tendency to perceive national democratic movements as manifestations of separatism (Остапець, 2016). Russia's influence can be traced in all aspects of life in the eastern regions of Ukraine. This is especially true of culture, language and self-identification. Therefore, Russia's choice of hybrid war tactics was quite logical. This type of conflict presupposes, first of all, the use of modern propaganda technologies and the spread of misinformation among the population of the enemy country (Грідіна та Булик, 2019). This in turn created a different view on the events that take place in 2014 in Ukraine, and the conflict in the East of Ukraine. Most of the region's population remained in the temporarily occupied territory. The result is the loss of a large number of voters in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. All the above factors affect the political processes taking place in the region and in Ukraine in general.

Donetsk region is an important and integral part of Ukraine. Therefore, its return, after the crisis of 2014, to the economic and, most importantly, political life of Ukraine, is today one of the main goals of the country. The study of the political process in the Donetsk region is necessary for the effective reintegration of the region into the country's political system and counteraction to hybrid war tactics and in future may become the basis for the peaceful return of the temporarily occupied territories under control of Ukraine. In addition, all the above factors prove the importance and relevance of studying the political process in the region to strengthen Ukraine's national security.

Conflict in eastern Ukraine certainly affects the political process, not only in the Donetsk region, but in the country as a whole, which in turn has given rise to a significant amount of research. This problem attracts the attention of many scientists such as Y. Ostapets, (Остапець,

2016) M. Karmazina, T. Bevz, N. Rotar, (Кармазіна, Бевз, та Ротар, 2018) T. Vozniak. (Возняк, 2015) and others. Their work focused on the analysis and characterization of the geopolitical aspect of Russia's "aggressive" intervention in Ukraine, as well as its broader negative political and economic consequences not only for the Donetsk region, but also for Ukraine. Some issues of the political process were raised in the works of such researchers as I. Gridina (Грідіна, 2015), M. Bulyk (Грідіна та Булик, 2019), O. Gilchenko (Гільченко, 2017). Given the previous experience of studying the peculiarities of the political process in the Donetsk region after the Revolution of Dignity, today there is an urgent need for a comprehensive analysis of the party and political process in Ukraine and its individual regions. The significance of this work lies in the fact that the topic of the political process in the Donetsk region since 2014 has not been the subject of a separate study.

The source base of this intelligence is legislative acts, documents of political parties, statistical materials of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, etc.

Purpose of this article is to study the political process in the Donetsk region after the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine. The author considers it expedient to analyze the main components of the political process in the Donetsk region through the characteristics of political parties, public organizations, generalization the results of local and all-Ukrainian elections.

The term political process itself is complex, which leads to many interpretations. In general, the political process is understood as a set of political actions and events through which political actors, such as parties, Non-governmental organizations (NGO) and others try to achieve their specific goals in a particular area or issue (Шведа, 2005).

Parties are one of the important actors in the political process. As stated in the Law of Ukraine on Political Parties, a political party is a legally registered voluntary association of citizens – supporters of a national program of social development, which aims to promote the formation and expression of political will of citizens, participates in elections and other political events. They present their ideologies, goals and methods of achieving goal at elections and gain the right to implement them with the support of society (Закон України Про політичні партії в Україні № 2365-III, 2001). The peculiarity of the party system of Ukraine has several main features.

The first is the pluralism of the system. On 1 January, 2020, 349 parties were registered in Ukraine (Центральна виборча комісія України. Вибори Президента України 2019), which is a result of the pluralization of the Ukrainian party system, where the number of parties is not limited. Although only 5% of all parties actively participate in the election process.

Secondly, it is the personification of the party. The reverse side of pluralization was the personification of politics and the associated weakness of political parties. Today, the level of support for a political force directly depends on the popularity and electoral attractiveness of its leader.

Third is the regionalization of party support. The main focus in the political system of Ukraine was the attempts of all key parties to clearly define the regional dimension of their electoral base. In addition, the main agitation work of one or another force during the election campaigns is carried out in the regions of traditional support. Radical changes began in 2019 with the emergence of the party «Sluha narodu», which received support in the presidential election in almost all regions of Ukraine (Центральна виборча комісія України. Вибори Президента України 2019).

Various political forces are represented in the Donetsk region. In particular, the issue of the attitude of the population of the region to the parties is relevant, which is the result of the activities of the parties themselves, their popularity and election campaigns. One of the most popular political parties is the «Sluha narodu». The party's website states that its main values are transparent

activities, openness to the people, responsibility to the country, teamwork, and the goal of the party is the equality of all Ukrainians before the law (Передвиборна програма політичної партії «Слуга народу», 2019).

In general, the program document contains provisions characteristic of both liberal and social democratic ideologies. Thus, the party advocates deregulation, demonopolization of the economy and at the same time expanding the social security of citizens (Передвиборна програма політичної партії «Слуга народу», 2019).

In the field of foreign policy, the «Sluha narodu» acts as a pro-European vector party that supports Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration. At the same time, in the field of culture and national policy, the party program expresses centrist positions, in particular, it is stated that the party intends to introduce humanitarian policy that will promote cultural, civic and spiritual unification of Ukrainian citizens (Передвиборна програма політичної партії «Слуга народу», 2019). The party does not have a clearly defined ideological basis and is universal, which aims to cover as large an electorate as possible.

Party «Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia»» (former «Opozytsiinyi blok»). From the general context of the political parties that won parliamentary representation as a result of the elections, he stands out with his views on domestic and foreign policy. The party's program clearly traces the party's focus on the Russian Federation, Soviet values and ideals.

Given the steps the party is proposing to overcome political tensions in society, such as “imposing a moratorium on decisions that split the country; a policy of reconciliation and consent that will unite Ukrainians from West to East and from North to South, "sew" the country; abolition as unconstitutional, discriminatory laws on language, education, renaming of the church; on decommunization, lustration and other acts that violate the rights and freedoms of citizens (Передвиборна програма політичної партії «Опозиційна платформа - «За життя», 2019) the party can be classified as reactionary.

According to the party, the basis of economic stability is the industrialization of the state. This provision is at odds with the theses of other parties that the basis of economic development should be the introduction of new information technologies (Передвиборна програма політичної партії «Опозиційна платформа - «За життя», 2019).

In foreign policy, the «Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia»» is fully focused on the Russian Federation and advocates "ensuring the active neutrality of Ukraine in the military-political sphere and non-participation in any military-political alliances, as provided in Chapter IX of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine; cessation of the policy of mutual sanctions and restoration of mutually beneficial trade and economic ties with Russia and the CIS countries; revision of the conditions of Ukraine's participation in the World Trade Organization and the free trade zone with the European Union "(Передвиборна програма політичної партії «Опозиційна платформа - «За життя», 2019).

Thus, the party does not consider the Russian Federation as an aggressor, and sees the resolution of the conflict in Donbass in “ensuring direct talks in the quadrangle Kyiv-Donetsk-Luhansk-Moscow; ending the economic blockade of Donbass; granting the autonomous status of Donbass as an integral part of Ukraine by amending the Constitution and laws of Ukraine; adoption of laws on amnesty, elections and free economic zone in Donbass. According to the party, the implementation of the Plan-Concept for the settlement of the crisis in the South-East of Ukraine is a way to establish peace and return Donbass to Ukraine, and Ukraine to Donbass " (Передвиборна програма політичної партії «Опозиційна платформа - «За життя», 2019).

The analysis of the program «Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia»» gives grounds to claim that the party can be conditionally attributed to the center-left parties, and in the party's views on humanitarian policy to the reactionary ones, nostalgic for the Soviet past.

The Petro Poroshenko Bloc «Solidarnist» Party (later «Yevropeiska Solidarnist») defines its ideology in its program as follows: "At the heart of our ideology is the idea of solidarity." The ideology of the party has a clearly defined nationalist orientation, in particular, it is determined that «Solidarnist» is the protection of Ukrainian traditions, the reproduction of values and cultural identity inherited from previous generations. Our values and beliefs are based on the idea of solidarity, on which a free solidarity society should be built" (Програма політичної партії «Блок Петра Порошенка «Солідарність», 2015). Such provisions of the party's program testify to the party's commitment in national politics to the ideas of national conservatism.

Among the main social values, the party identified as fundamental for itself first of all – dignity, patriotism, responsibility, democracy, justice. Defining state policy in the field of economic regulation, the party advocates minimizing state intervention in the economic sphere.

According to the party's provisions, Ukraine's foreign policy should be aimed at ensuring Euro-Atlantic integration and integration with the EU. The program of the party clearly defines the Russian Federation as an aggressor, the fight against which should be aimed at foreign policy, and the method of such a fight is effective diplomacy (Програма політичної партії «Блок Петра Порошенка «Солідарність», 2015).

The program of the «Batkivshchyna» party has a rather important social component. In particular, the program states that the party's priority is free medicine and education, raising minimum pensions and salaries (Програма політичної партії «Блок Петра Порошенка «Солідарність», 2015).

The foreign policy priorities of the «Batkivshchyna» are the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and the provision of the NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Ukraine. The party's program also emphasizes the need to start negotiations on the reintegration of annexed Crimea and Russian-occupied Donbass "according to the Budapest + formula, involving states such as the United States and Great Britain in the settlement process." The party is a supporter of small and medium business development, advocating for "macro- and micro-lending to businesses on European terms". The party program does not follow a clear position on important issues of the party's humanitarian policy, in particular, on language, memory policy, religious issues (Передвиборна програма політичної партії «Всеукраїнське об'єднання «Батьківщина», 2015).

In general, the analysis of the program of the All-Ukrainian Association «Batkivshchyna» gives grounds to classify the party according to the ideological criterion as a social-democratic party.

The party process in the Donetsk region differs significantly from the all-Ukrainian one, which is primarily due to Russian influence. Due to this, pro-Russian parties have support in the region at a time when pro-European parties are gaining popularity in Ukraine. Secondly, it is regional determinism. Therefore, local parties have more support in the region than all-Ukrainian ones, while in Ukraine national parties win local elections. Third, the conflict in eastern Ukraine (since 2014). Parties that put the conflict in eastern Ukraine at the forefront of their political programs are gaining more support in the region. At that time, the general Ukrainian trend is the victory of parties whose main goal is to improve the living standards of Ukrainians and the fight against corruption.

As for the political map of the region, the eastern regions were usually the party cell of the «Partiia Rehioniv». This party has consistently won elections in the region since 2000, but after the events of 2014, the situation has changed dramatically. First, due to the loss of trust of the electorate and the centralized management of the «Partiia Rehioniv», it self-liquidated. Former members from the Partiia rehioniv created a new political force, the «Opozytsiinyi blok», which later became the «Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia»». Second, almost half of the population and settlements remained in the temporarily occupied territory. Third, the new parties were able to occupy a certain niche in the region. The beginning of the decentralization reform and the results of the elections to the united territorial communities (UTG) in Donetsk region show that there is no leader of electoral sympathies in the region. In some communities, the «Opozytsiinyi blok», «Solidarnist», «Sluha narodu», «Batkivshchyna», and self-nominated candidates won.

The election process itself has changed. Compared to 2014, during the 2019 elections, voter turnout increased significantly. Thus, in 2014 during the election of the President of Ukraine in the controlled territories of Donetsk region, the final turnout was 15.1% (Центральна виборча комісія України. Вибори Президента України 2019). This is due to the conflict in Donbass, as a large number of Ukrainian citizens remained in uncontrolled territory and were unable to participate in the elections. According to the results of the 2019 presidential election, activity increased to 57.23%. Voter preferences of voters also underwent significant changes, if in 2014 Petro Poroshenko won (within the Donetsk region) (36.15% of votes "for", in 2019 the majority of voters (86.94%) supported Volodymyr Zelensky (Центральна виборча комісія України. Вибори Президента України 2019). Volodymyr Zelensky's result is interesting because in the first round of elections he received more than 30% of the vote and was the first in almost the entire country, except for the macro-regions of Donbass (Donetsk and Luhansk regions) and Galicia (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil regions). However, in these regions, he was among the top three (Центральна виборча комісія України. Вибори Президента України 2019). The results of voting for the candidate V. Zelensky in Donbass fully correspond to the national trends and do not stand out sharply from them.

Significant changes in voter turnout were observed during the parliamentary elections. In 2014, the final turnout within the controlled territories of Donetsk region was 32.4%, and in 2019 - 45.72%. Compared to 2014, the 2019 parliamentary elections resulted in a significant loss of support for the «Opozytsiinyi blok» and «BPP Solidarnist» parties and massive support for the newly formed political party Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia». According to the results of voting during the 2014 parliamentary elections, the «Opozytsiinyi blok» political party received the most votes in the Donetsk region - 38.69%. The second position was taken by the «BPP Solidarnist» party - 18.22% of the vote. During the 2019 parliamentary elections, the «Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia»» received 43.41% of the vote, and the "Sluha narodu" took second place with 27.19% (Центральна виборча комісія України. Вибори народних депутатів України 2019).

Within the majority constituencies, electoral sentiment has also changed significantly. In 2014, one representative from BPP Solidarity and the Opposition Bloc and 10 self-nominated candidates, who later joined the parliamentary faction of the «Opozytsiinyi blok» and «BPP Solidarnist» political parties, won in the Donetsk region. "Renaissance" or remained non-partisan. Most of the candidates who won the 2014 parliamentary elections were not new faces for the Donetsk region, but for the most part were former members of the Party of Regions. According to the results of the parliamentary elections in 2019, 4 deputies ran from the «Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia»», 4 - from the «Opozytsiinyi blok», 3 - self-nominated and 1 - from the

«Batkivshchyna» All-Ukrainian Union. The 3 candidates who won in their constituencies were members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VIII convocation, including Maksym Yefimov and Yuriy Solod, who were self-nominated in 2014, and Dmytro Lubinets, who ran in 2014 from the «BPP Solidarity» political party.»(Програма політичної партії «Європейська Солідарність». 2019).

The next elections took place in Donetsk region on October 25, 2020. These elections provided for the election of only mayors of cities, villages and settlements, as well as deputies of district councils in the territories controlled by Ukraine. The leaders of the party race in the region from the beginning were the parties «Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia»» and «Sluha narodu». «Opozytsiina platforma - «Za zhyttia»» showed a result of 33.6%, «Sluha narodu» - 29.1%, third place with 12.8% was won by regional parties, which are not very well known at the national level, followed by «Opozytsiinyi blok» - 10.4% (Центральна виборча комісія України. Місцеві вибори України 2020).

During the election, regional parties came to the fore. Their growth is associated with decentralization processes, that is, with the growth of local budgets. The well-being of each resident depends not so much on national issues as, first and foremost, on the position of local authorities. The dominance of the regional agenda and the importance that voters attach to the development of their hometown, in particular, is very evident in the example of the rating of political forces in the Mariupol community. The current mayor's party, the «Vadym Boychenko Bloc», is in the lead there – 30.6%. In second place «Servant of the People» – 25.3%. In the regional center of the Donetsk region of Kramatorsk, the regional party «Nash Kramatorsk» leads with 26.4%, followed by the «Sluha narodu» (24.9%) (Центральна виборча комісія України. Місцеві вибори України 2020).

The main trend in this election is the victory of regional parties. Voters in local elections elect those they know and trust. That is why we see parties forming around incumbent mayors who have run for a second term.

The second important subject of politics is public organizations, their presence is an important factor for the formation and development of an effective and democratic political process. Until 2014, civil society was poorly developed in the region and had a human rights orientation. But with the beginning of the conflict in Donbass, many volunteer organizations were created to support the military at the front, and further the main trend was the reorientation of the volunteer movement (transition from emergency to systemic education), professional growth, diversification of funding sources (decline from donor support) (Закон України Про громадські об'єднання, 2012).

In terms of activities, the most common in Ukraine are human rights organizations and organizations aimed at activating the community. At the same time, in the Donetsk region there are more common public organizations that focus on IDPs (internally displaced persons) and victims of the military conflict in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, military and anti-terrorist operation veterans, and organizations are also active. uniting active IDPs from different cities. The activities of organizations focus on the development of civil society, education, entrepreneurship (Закон України Про громадські об'єднання, 2012).

Anti-corruption organizations, think tanks and monitoring NGOs are active, advocating for reforms at the local level, assessing the level of transparency of local authorities, and educating. These are NGOs «Strong Communities», «Access Point» (Кармазіна, Бєвз та Ротар, 2018).

According to the Main Department of Statistics of Ukraine in the Donetsk region, more than five thousand public organizations are registered in the region (Державна служба статистики

України, 2020). In general, public activity is concentrated around the largest urban centers such as Kramatorsk, Mariupol, Slovyansk.

The activities of public organizations require not only the involvement of citizens, but also financial support. Relevant support in the Donetsk region is provided by international foundations and organizations. According to the Donbass Studies study «Status and conditions of development of urban NGOs (non-governmental organization) and initiatives in Mariupol, Kramatorsk, Slovyansk», in 2015 international donor programs and projects were launched mainly for the reconstruction of Donbass. Fewer projects have been implemented to strengthen governance and civil society, as well as infrastructure development. In 2016, the main part of the projects that were launched concerned the restoration of Donbass (Кармазіна, Бєвз та Ротар, 2018).

Thus, the Donetsk region has many factors that influence political process and make it exceptional, and not similar to the all-Ukrainian. This is the conflict in eastern Ukraine, which has actualized changes in the political system in the region. In particular, there was a general pluralization of the system (the appearance of new parties in the region). Similarly, recently there has been a decline in the rating of left-wing parties and a reformatting of the principle of forming political sympathies of citizens. It has become important to increase the general level of public interest in politics, which is observed not only during election campaigns, but also in the periods between elections. These factors led to the emergence of new and transformation of old parties.

The socio-political situation in the region remains difficult, but not critical, and it is hoped that it will not grow into a deep confrontation, as the country is undergoing positive changes, in particular at the regional level, the emergence of new political forces in the region and civil society, accelerate development of the political process. After 2014, the basis for the division of voter sympathies was the support of the left or national democratic parties. In 2019, a new stage in the development of the political system of the Donetsk region began, which was marked by the growing role of regional parties. The results of voting and turnout in the 2019-2020 elections in the Donetsk region indicate that the residents of the controlled part of Donbass had an electoral break, which manifested itself in the heyday of regional parties.

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ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ПОЛІТИЧНОГО ПРОЦЕСУ В ДОНЕЦЬКІЙ ОБЛАСТІ ПІСЛЯ 2014 Р.

Увага приділена особливостям політичного процесу в Донецькій області після Революції Гідності в Україні та початку військових дій на Сході України. Було проаналізовано основні складові політичного процесу. Зокрема розглянуто уставні документи політичних партій, проаналізовано результати загальноукраїнських та місцевих виборів, охарактеризовано громадські організації. Автор дійшов висновку, що регіональні економічні та соціально-політичні умови стали причиною загальної плюралізації політичної системи. Це проявилось в появі нових партій в регіоні, падінні рейтингу лівих партій і переформатування принципу формування політичних симпатій громадян. Стало актуальним зростання загального рівня зацікавленості населення політикою.

Ключові слова: політичний процес, вибори, партії, партійний процес, електорат, громадські організації.