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STAFF TRAINING OF PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS IN UKRAINE: PROBLEM ASPECTS AND WAYS OF SOLVING

Keywords: civil servant, staff policy, political elite, political management, professional political activity, managerial elite.

ABSTRACT: The article analyzes the major factors that have led to a lack of professionalism and competence among some of the politicians in power in Ukraine in recent years. One such factor may be the ability of a large part of citizens to come to power with financial and administrative resources in the conditions of broad access to public administration and local self-government, and many of these figures do not have a clear idea of governance and are driven by interested motives. The desire of Ukrainian society to replace the old ruling elite with new political forces by voting in parliamentary and local elections for newly created parties should also be considered, but it should be noted that most of their party list has never had political or managerial experience. Therefore, the emphasis is placed on the organization of staff training for professional political activity, primarily on the basis of leading higher education institutions that train civil servants, as well as political parties and public organizations aimed at educating future political leaders. The National Academy for Public Administration under the President of Ukraine plays a leading role in staffing public administration activities, while among non-governmental organizations, the “Young Batkivshchyna” NGO, the First Ukrainian Academy of Politics, the Ukrainian Leadership Academy, and the School of Democratic Governance for Youth should be singled out.

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The publication pays significant attention to the foreign experience of professional training of future managers and politicians based on specialized higher education institutions, where the emphasis is put on retraining, advanced training, and encouraging career growth. At the same time, particular consideration is given to the practice of public administration training in European countries and the possibility of applying this experience in Ukraine.

Based on the study of foreign experience, recommendations are provided to improve staff training in Ukraine for future professional political activity and governance. Given the world experience and current trends in the training of executives for public authorities, the issue of restoring the program “Presidential Staff Reserve “New Elite of the Nation” needs to be resolved.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Ukraine has experienced a situation when incompetent managers with a low level of professionalism and political culture come to power, both at the central, regional, and local levels. Many of them do not even have an idea of the content of political activity and governance. On the one hand, this is due to the wide opportunities for access to public administration in the context of strengthening the role of the legislative and executive branches of government in Ukraine’s socio-political life, as well as decentralization policy, which provides for the establishment of amalgamated territorial communities and granting significant power and material resources to local self-government (Kontseptsiya, 2014). Not the least role is played by the political and personal preferences of citizens, as well as the availability of financial and/or administrative resources of candidates at different levels.

On the other hand, incomplete socio-economic and socio-political transformations, together with numerous corruption scandals, the significant decades-long influence of the old political elite in Ukraine’s power structures led to the demand for new politicians in Ukrainian society, which contributed to Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s victory in the presidential

elections and of his party's "Servant of the People" victory in the parliamentary elections in 2019. At the same time, the election team of the current President of Ukraine experienced an acute shortage of staff while preparing for the parliamentary elections, so many people got in the "Servant of the People" party list without having any idea about the professional political activity or public administration, including in the socio-economic and humanitarian spheres, which are especially relevant for Ukrainian voters, but were guided by personal ambitions and desire to gain power under a well-known brand. The same can be said of Sviatoslav Vakarchuk's "Voice" political party, the party list of which was formed shortly before the parliamentary elections: citizens did not vote for a team of professionals, but for the leader of the newly formed party, who, having no significant political experience shortly left Ukrainian politics.

The deteriorating socio-economic situation in Ukraine against the background of the coronavirus pandemic, the unpreparedness of government agencies for new challenges resulted in that the pro-government party lost a significant part of votes in the local elections in October 2020.

Last but not least, the lack of due professionalism and competence of modern politicians and managers, the low level of the political culture are caused by the fact that the major political parties and parliamentary groups represented in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine today do not have a clear ideology and are mainly oriented at a particular leader (political parties: "Servant of the People", "European Solidarity", "Batkivshchyna", "Voice") or are funded by oligarchic groups. In such a situation, a lack of unity within a political party when voting for a bill is observed, and the transition of deputies from one political force to another is common.

It is important to note that one of the priority areas for improving the professionalism and competence of politicians is staff training for professional political and managerial activities. Therefore, the problem of training future political leaders is extremely relevant. The urgency of this topic is also due to the creation of amalgamated territorial communities, the administrative-territorial reform, which provides for the consolidation of districts within the regions. And the sustainable development of Ukraine in the socio-economic and humanitarian spheres at all levels will depend

on the level of professional training and political culture of the leaders of the amalgamated territorial communities and districts.

The purpose of this publication is to analyze the current situation and identify the best ways to improve the training of future politicians and managers in Ukraine.

In this regard, we highlight the following research objectives:

- to describe the current state of education of professional politicians and managers based on higher educational institutions of Ukraine, primarily the NAPA, as well as the training of future politicians by local branches of political parties and non-governmental organizations; to point out the main shortcomings of the relevant educational process;
- to analyze foreign experience in training managers and political leaders;
- to make recommendations for improving the training process for future political and managerial activities.

The methodological basis of the publication is the work of Ukrainian scientists, which also analyzes the foreign experience of training politicians and managers. The complexity of this problem determines further research in this area. Among the main research methods are the analysis of scientific articles on this issue and the study of documentary sources.

THE STATE OF TRAINING OF POLITICAL STAFF IN UKRAINE

The problem of training politicians and managers for public authorities has always been in the focus of Ukrainian society. In today's Ukraine, it is possible to distinguish several groups of higher education institutions and establishments, which to some extent train specialists for future political and managerial activities.

The first group includes higher education institutions, regardless of ownership, which train specialists in Political Science. Among them are: the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Faculty of Philosophy, where in addition to two political science departments, the department

of public administration operates); SHEI “Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman” (educational program “Political Technology and Leadership”); Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture (educational program “Political Management”); V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (educational program “Political Technologies and Policy Analysis”). At the same time, the training program in Political Science is general in nature and not directly aimed at training professional politicians. For many higher education institutions, including those with an economic focus, this specialty is not a specialized area of training.

The National Academy for Public Administration under the President of Ukraine (hereinafter – the NAPA), which was transferred to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine by the Decree of the President of Ukraine of November 5, 2020, is focused primarily on training, retraining and advanced training of current civil servants and local government officials for a master’s degree. However, the Department of Public Policy and the Department of Parliamentarism and Political Management of the NAPA are somehow involved in the training of future politicians. The same can be said about the Institute of Advanced Training of the Management Staff at the NAPA, which provides retraining for civil servants at all levels and local government officials. (Natsional’na akademiya, b.d.; Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy, 2020).

The third group is represented by political parties, as well as public organizations that train future politicians. However, it should be noted that in contrast to the 1990s, when youth organizations operated under political parties, today most political organizations do not practice establishing youth cells as a future staff reserve. The same can be said about the school of young politicians, which previously functioned under the Ministry of Youth and Sports (today the Ministry has only a department of youth policy). However, in recent years some parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties have organized political education programs, one of the main areas of which is to teach young people political leadership. In 2017, such programs were implemented by political parties: “The All-Ukrainian Union “Batkivshchyna”, “Petro Poroshenko’s Solidarity Bloc” (now the “European Solidarity” political party), “Samopomich”, and others.

For example, the all-Ukrainian youth organization “Batkivshchyna Moloda”, which today has about 30,000 members and supporters, at times organizes courses “School of Political Success”, “School of European Politician”, “School for Press Secretaries”, and “The People Deputy’s Academy”. The purpose of such measures is to educate “a new political elite that will rule the state in 10–15 years” (Zakharova O., Oksytyuk A., Radchenko S., 2017, p. 9–12; Bat’kivshchyna moloda, b.d.). Short-term courses in political education are also organized by other political parties, in particular, “European Solidarity” and “Samopomich”. However, most political forces, including the parliamentary factions “Opposition Platform for Life”, “Servant of the People” and “Voice”, do not pay much attention to the political education of their supporters and do not plan to develop relevant programs in the near future.

Also within the framework of a public project, there exists the First Ukrainian Academy of Politics (FUAP) – an educational platform that “provides qualified educational services in political and state management, domestic legislation, PR and communications” in the form of lectures, trainings, workshops, educational courses conducted by people’s deputies of Ukraine and well-known politicians. These measures are aimed at training future politicians, including assistants to people’s deputies and public figures. Among the well-known courses held and conducted within the FUAP are: “General Course of Political Education”, “School of Youth Self-Government”, training courses “Assistant to Deputy”, “Local Elections”, “Young Diplomat Course”, “Women’s Political Leadership Course” and others. (Persha Ukrayins’ka Akademiya polityky, b.d.).

However, although well-known Ukrainian political scientists and statesmen are involved in teaching, and the best students are sent for internships in public authorities, the duration of most courses does not exceed a few days, and the FUAP itself operates mainly voluntarily.

Unlike the FUAP, the Ukrainian Leadership Academy (ULA), founded in 2015, runs a ten-month training course for young people aged 16 to 20, which includes elements of physical, emotional, and intellectual development. Although the ULA is only an educational project that does not aim to train professional politicians, its program is focused on developing leadership skills in young people, which will help them take responsibility

for the fate of their country in the future, and theoretical knowledge is supported by successful practices of training future managers in Israel (where 60 leadership academies have been established over 20 years) and EU countries. In addition to Kyiv, today the ULA cells operate in Kharkiv, Poltava, Lviv, Mykolayiv, Chernivtsi, and Mariupol. At the same time, the organization of the educational process in the ULA does not provide in-depth knowledge of the fundamentals of law, political science, and public administration, which are the basic disciplines in the training of future professional politicians (Tvoye zhyttya – u tvoyikh rukakh, 2020); Ukrayins’ka Akademiya liderstva, b.d.).

Concluding the overview of public initiatives to prepare youth for future political and state-building activities, it is worth mentioning the “School of Democratic Governance for Youth” (Ternopil), the first session of which lasted from 16 to 18 December 2020. This project, which was implemented with the participation of the NGO “Educational and Analytical Center for Community Development” in cooperation with the Ternopil regional branch of the “Association of Ukrainian Cities” and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), is aimed at training youth policy specialists to work in local communities. In 2021, as part of this project, it is planned to hold three more educational sessions and training, to prepare a “Draft strategy for developing the youth environment in the community” (Volokhatyy S., 2020). However, such short-term courses, which last from a few days to ten months, cannot fully provide training for professional political activity, which becomes especially relevant in the context of decentralization of power and the development of local self-government in Ukraine. Besides, one of the main problems of the management training system in Ukraine is the unregulated legal framework, and the NAPA will be substantially reorganized with its transition to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. Therefore, the study of foreign experience in training, retraining, and advanced training of management staff, as well as training of professional politicians and political leaders becomes essential.

FOREIGN EXPERIENCE OF TRAINING MANAGERIAL STAFF

In many foreign countries, the staffing of public administration is carried out in leading specialized educational institutions: the Civil Service College in the UK, the National School of Public Administration (France, Poland), the Federal Academy of Public Administration (Germany), etc. In contrast to European countries, the United States trains and retrain civil servants at various levels, as well as future professional politicians, through a large number of universities, colleges, and schools, but the leading ones are the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and the New York University's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. At the same time, the countries of Anglo-Saxon law (the UK, the US, Canada, Australia), in contrast to continental Europe (France, Germany, and others), are dominated by an open system of training for public authorities, based on professionalism, free access to public service, strict control of civil society over the activities of government officials and politicians. At the same time, the Anglo-Saxon states and the states of continental Europe are characterized by constant training and retraining of government officials. However, in continental Europe, this process is caused not so much by competition as by the desire of managers to maintain their position and effectively perform managerial functions (Holobor N. YU., b.d., p. 2–5).

In contrast to Ukrainian educational institutions, political leaders abroad are trained at the leading universities: Harvard (US), Oxford, Cambridge (UK), and others (Batushan V.V., 2011, p. 6).

A distinctive feature of managerial training in the United Kingdom and largely in the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden is the inclusion of basic legal education, the application of criteria for assessing the competence of officials for continuous professional development and adding seminars, trainings, and conferences to study programs.

In Germany, on the other hand, in addition to the legal component of the educational process of future managers (which is the main one), a significant role is given to economic disciplines, continuity of education, which is regulated at the legislative level.

In contrast to Germany, the French system of training the future managerial and political elite provides an in-depth study of economics, continual advanced training courses, as well as developing students' high administrative culture, professionalism, and competence, the ability to communicate with citizens. At the same time, the French system of training managers, which Ukraine is trying to adapt to its needs, despite its stability, is focused on training managers of the highest category, while middle and lower-level managers are not covered by training. With new political leaders coming to power, the changes affect only the highest level of governance (Mel'nyk A., Kononenko T., 2012; Trubina M.V., Yefimenko L.L., b.d.; Shevchenko S.O., Koval' H.V., 2019). Across continental Europe, France is considered the "leader in cultivating the elite" (administrative, political). Moreover, the French system of training the state elite is focused on career growth (Elitoznastvo, 2013, p. 230–231).

Regular internships of political and managerial elite, advanced training of managerial staff are practiced in Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, Belgium, Lithuania, Latvia, which is regulated by the legislation of these countries (Shevchenko S.O., Koval' H.V., 2019).

In Poland, graduates of the Lech Kaczyński National School of Public Administration (KSAP, Warsaw) are primarily involved in the civil service. The curriculum of this university is focused on training civil servants for the central and regional levels, improving their skills, conducting seminars and trainings, learning foreign languages, and the basic legislation of EU member states. Exchange of experience between Polish officials and civil servants from other countries is also practiced. At the same time, Polish law clearly distinguishes between political and administrative positions, and civil servants are prohibited from openly expressing political views and engaging in political activities.

At the same time, it should be added that public positions in Poland are often occupied by unskilled people, and some local officials do not even have higher education, but the separation of political positions from public ones makes Polish officials politically neutral, therefore, this public administration experience can be useful for Ukraine (Mosora L.S., 2018, p. 2–4; Voytsits'ka K.M., b.d., p. 2–3).

Unlike many EU member states and the United States, Japan does not have national training institutions for professional management, but this function is assigned to specialized agencies that develop their own programs, while the National Personnel Authority controls education, internships, and advanced training (Shevchenko S.O., Koval' H.V., 2019).

Summarizing the experience of foreign countries in training the managerial elite, it is necessary to mention the MES-concept, which is used in the professional training of future managers and is based on the following principles: focus on activities; the leading role of learners; result guarantee; the role of the political leader in the public administration system is also taken into account (Batushan V.V., 2011, p. 4).

CONCLUSIONS

Given the foreign experience of training the managerial elite, in order to improve the training of specialists in Ukraine for future political and managerial activities, we consider it necessary:

first, to regulate at the legislative level the mechanisms of training, retraining and advanced training of managerial staff, in particular, future political leaders; bring relevant domestic legislation in line with European standards; the emphasis should be placed on lifelong training of managers, and to minimize the entry of incompetent people into high government positions, the mechanism of career growth, starting from the lowest level should be clearly regulated.

second, to organize the educational process in such a way as to direct it to the formation of professional competence of the future political elite and the education of political leaders.

third, the educational process should be focused more on the practical training of the future managerial elite, introducing additional trainings, seminars, internships in public authorities and abroad.

Taking into account the world experience and current trends in management training for public authorities, it seems relevant to restore in an updated format the program "Presidential Staff Reserve "New Elite of the Nation", which was implemented on the basis of the NAPA during

2012–2014 and was aimed at training of the most talented Ukrainian citizens for leading positions in public administration.

It would also be expedient to create on the basis of the NAPA an Institute for Training of Political Leaders, especially since the Department of Public Policy and the Department of Parliamentarism and Political Management have been functioning in this educational institution for a long time.

It is necessary to study the organization of training of future civil servants and officials for local governments in universities of Ukraine based on general secondary education, and not only in the master's program. As an example, one can think of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, where on the basis of the Department of Public Administration not only masters but also bachelors are trained in the educational program "Public Administration" and the Inter-regional Academy of Personnel Management. Since 2016, this institution has been training specialists in the educational program "Public Administration" on the basis of complete general secondary education; master's, postgraduate and doctoral programs are also available.

It is possible to organize long-term training courses (lasting at least one academic year) on the basis of the First Ukrainian Academy of Politics, as well as special courses for civil servants and local government officials with the involvement of public administration professionals, not only well-known politicians and political scientists.

In this regard, the ULA training program should emphasize the in-depth study of the fundamentals of state and law, political science, public administration, history of state and law of Ukraine. Such long-term courses should be organized on the basis of the School of Democratic Governance for Youth and those political and non-governmental organizations that are interested in training future managers and political leaders.

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