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**THE DYNAMICS OF POLITICAL REGIME IN MODERN UKRAINE:
EMPIRICAL DIMENSION**

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The article elucidates institutional components of political regime in Ukraine that determine the state's failures or success in the course of systemic democratization. Political and civil levels of political regime transformation are being contemplated taking into consideration the methodological basis and data of Freedom House (Nations in Transit) and Bertelsmann Fund. Substantial attention has been paid to dynamic indicators of political regime in Ukraine as based on empirical markers, particular time framework as well as characteristic features of social and political condition.

Keywords: Ukraine, political regime, political regime dynamics, empirical research, democratization markers, Freedom House, Nations in Transit, Bertelsmann Fund.

**ДИНАМИКА ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОГО РЕЖИМА
В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ УКРАИНЕ: ЭМПИРИЧЕСКОЕ ИЗМЕРЕНИЕ**

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В статье рассматриваются институциональные составляющие политического режима в Украине, определяющие успехи или неудачи страны в ходе системной демократизации. На методологической основе исследований, проведенных организациями «Freedom House» (Nations in Transit) и «Bertelsmann Found», изучаются политический и гражданский уровни трансформации политического режима. Значительное внимание уделяется динамическим характеристикам политического режима Украины, за основу берутся эмпирические показатели, четкие временные рамки и специфику социально-политической конъюнктуры.

Ключевые слова: Украина, политический режим, динамика политического режима, эмпирические исследования, индексы демократизации, Freedom House, Nations in Transit, Bertelsmann Found.

Transformation of political institutions in Ukraine is characterized by consistency, including features of both static and dynamic processes. Problematic issues of transformation can be traced and objectively determined by means of comparative analysis based on empirical methodology. While contemplating institutional changes within the scope of Post-Soviet Ukraine's political transformation, it seems fair and efficient to employ empirical indices of calculation of progress or failure markers on the way to democracy, used by the World research centres. Among the aforementioned centres, it is necessary to point out Freedom House (monitoring programme Nations in Transit) and Bertelsmann Fund (Political Transformation Index).

Empirical breakdown of data of **Nations in Transit**. On the basis of democratization index of Post-Soviet Ukraine from 1996 to 2014, several concluding remarks can be pointed out as far as the political transformation trajectory is concerned.

Table 1.1.
The Data on Democracy Index of Ukraine on the Basis of the Monitoring Programme Nations in Transit (1996 – 2003) [2]

Democracy Markers	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<i>Electoral Process</i>	3,25	3,50	3,50	3,50	4,00	4,50	4,00	4,25
<i>Civil Society</i>	4,00	4,25	4,00	4,00	3,75	3,75	3,50	3,75
<i>Independent Media</i>	4,50	4,75	5,00	5,00	5,25	5,50	5,50	5,50
<i>National Democratic Governance</i>	4,50	4,75	4,75	4,75	4,75	5,00	5,00	5,25
<i>Local Democratic Governance</i>								
<i>Judicial Framework and Independence</i>	3,75	4,00	4,50	4,50	4,50	4,75	4,50	4,75
<i>Corruption</i>	–	–	6,00	6,00	6,00	6,00	5,75	5,75
Democracy Score	4,00	4,25	4,63	4,63	4,71	4,92	4,71	4,88

Table 1.2.

The Data on Democracy Index of Ukraine on the Basis of the Monitoring Programme Nations in Transit (2003 – 2014) [2]

Democracy Markers	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Electoral Process</i>	3,50	3,25	3,00	3,00	3,50	3,50	3,50	3,75	4,00	4,00	3,50
<i>Civil Society</i>	3,00	2,75	2,75	2,75	2,75	2,75	2,75	2,75	2,75	2,50	2,25
<i>Independent Media</i>	4,75	3,75	3,75	3,50	3,50	3,50	3,75	4,00	4,00	4,25	4,00
<i>National Democratic Governance</i>	5,00	4,50	4,75	4,75	5,00	5,00	5,50	5,75	5,75	6,00	6,00
<i>Local Democratic Governance</i>	5,25	5,25	5,25	5,25	5,25	5,25	5,50	5,50	5,50	5,50	5,50
<i>Judicial Framework and Independence</i>	4,25	4,25	4,50	4,75	5,00	5,00	5,50	6,00	6,00	6,00	6,00
<i>Corruption</i>	5,75	5,75	5,75	5,75	5,75	5,75	5,75	6,00	6,00	6,25	6,00
Democracy Score	4,50	4,21	4,25	4,25	4,39	4,39	4,61	4,82	4,86	4,93	4,75

Annual monitoring includes data for the previous calendar year (for instance, 2015 survey calculates indexation for the year 2014).

Democratization Progress. As it can be seen above, the most successful marker of all is the Civil Society Development marker. The average marker makes up 3,19, correlating with quantitative indicators of semi-consolidated democracy. The Civil Society marker is characterized by irregular quantitative patterns: 1) 1996 – 2004 – the indicator, typical of the country with the hybrid regime; 2) 2005 – 2014 – the index, peculiar for countries with consolidated democracy regime.

Democratization Regress. The level of corruption can be considered the worst marker, being 5.88 on the average, which as a rule corresponds to the indices of semi-consolidated authoritarian regime. The most threatening aspect of all is Ukraine's long-term and steady position in the group of the least democratic countries (consolidated authoritarian regime) with the indicator being 6.00 – 6.25 during two periods: 1996 – 2001 (presidentialism of Leonid Kuchma) and 2011 – 2014

(oligarchic-kleptocratic regime of Viktor Yanukovych). The most successful indicators of 5.75 can be traced within the period of 2002 – 2010, correlating with those of countries with semi-consolidated authoritarian regime.

Steady Democracy marker. The steadiest marker is the marker of self-governing (the development of local self-government system), that has been calculated separately since 2004, being the component of a broader “government” marker in the period from 1996 to 2003. Starting with 2004 qualitative gradation constitutes no more than 0.25, being the evidence of stagnation processes in the political institute development. The average indicator comprises 5.1, including the institute of local democracy, which is a sign of countries with semi-consolidated authoritarian regime.

Final Democracy Condition. In 2004 (according to 2015 survey) Ukraine can be referred to countries with the hybrid political regime (transient government). The average democracy indicator (4.56) as based on all criteria proves that Ukraine is characterized by mixed tendencies on the way to political regime democratization with a slight slant towards democracy. The highest democracy indicator was 4.00 in 1996, the lowest was documented in 2013, being 4.93.

Post-Soviet Ukraine displays ambiguous vector of political transformation with typical features of both authoritarianism and democracy. In accordance with the indexation data, Ukraine is closer to authoritarian regime, as recessive tendencies in democracy development seem likely to prevail. Political transformation in Ukraine can be arbitrarily divided into 3 stages:

1) democratization retrogression (1996-2003) – the country is prone to authoritarian regime, regardless of favourable background and launch opportunities (indicator of 4.00 – 4.25 in 1996-1997);

2) democratization progress (2004-2009) – the country is on the way to a partial democratic regime, though retaining institutional basis of the hybrid regime;

3) democratization retrogression (2010-2014) – obvious authoritarian tendencies, including the worst indicators in 2013 (4.93), which reflects proximity to semi-consolidated authoritarian regime.

Empirical Data Breakdown by Bertelsmann Fund. General methodology entitled Transformation Index was designated by Bertelsmann Fund representatives and presupposes research of comprehensive institutional factors that determine the very nature of transformation. In order to define the trajectory of political system transformation the so-called Political Transformation Index is commonly employed.

Overall conclusions about the directions of political transformation in Post-Soviet Ukraine (1998-2013) in lieu of Political Transformation Index.

Table 2.

The Data of Political Transformation Index in Ukraine According to the Bertelsmann Fund Methodology (1998 – 2013) [1]

Democracy Markers	2003 Report (1998-2002 Survey)	2006 Report (2003-2005 Survey)	2008 Report (2005-2007 Survey)	2010 Report (2007-2009 Survey)	2012 Report (2009-2011 Survey)	2014 Report (2011-2013 Survey)
<i>Stateness</i>	8,0	8,0	8,8	8,8	8,8	8,8
<i>Political Participation</i>	6,0	7,8	7,8	7,8	6,0	6,0
<i>Rule of Law</i>	6,0	7,0	6,8	6,3	5,0	5,0
<i>Stability of Democratic Institutions</i>	6,0	6,5	7,5	6,5	5,5	5,5
<i>Political and Social Integration</i>	6,0	6,3	6,0	5,8	5,3	5,3
Democracy Score	6,40	7,10	7,35	7,00	6,10	6,10

2003 Report. The first concluding monitoring was released in 2003, chronologically embracing the period from 1998 to 2002. Score index made up 6.40, the fact proving ambiguous nature of democratization. From late 1990s to early 2000s, Ukraine remained close to non-democratic countries, the indicator being less than 6. The highest indicator is generally Stateness (8.00). The rest of indicators are considered to be constant, being ranked between «defective democracies» and «highly defective democracies».

The final score describes the directions of political transformation in Ukraine as such that is peculiar for countries with deficient democracy. Among 117 countries under investigation Ukraine is ranked 44th in terms of successful movement of political transformation towards democracy.

2006 Report. The period of 2003 – early 2005 is being explored. The final score makes up 7.10, the figure being the direct evidence of intensification of the nationwide democratization strategy as well as the systemic nature of democratic transformation. The increase in qualitative markers is quite steady and consistent. The most obvious progress is observed in accordance with the “Political Participation” and the “Rule of Law” markers.

Ukraine retains its status of deficient democracy, closely approaching the group of countries with consolidated democracy (the score of 8-10). On the whole, the total number of countries under research is 120, Ukraine being the 37th.

2008 Report. The period from the second half of 2005 to early 2007 is being contemplated. The total score of democratic transformation has increased, comprising 7.35. According to our research the most progressive criteria are “Stateness” and “Stability of Democratic Institutions”.

Ukraine stabilizes and intensifies its democratization policy, yet remain in gin the group of countries with defective democracy. Ukraine is ranked 35 out of 126 countries under investigation.

2010 Report. The author has contemplated the period of late 2007 – early 2009. It must be mentioned that decline in democratic transformation is quite noticeable, with the index of 7.00 and its decrease by 0.35. Ukraine gradually loses on democratization progress, achieved over the past years, the worst indicator being “Stability of Democratic Institutions” (1.00) that proves substantial retrogression. The rest of markers more or less keep to the democratic development vector.

Ukraine remains one of the countries with defective democracies. In the world rating (129 countries), Ukraine holds 37 position in lieu of its political institutions democratic transformation.

2012 Report. Political transformation over the period of late 2009 – early 2011 is analysed. In the course of this period Ukraine displays substantial recession and deterioration as far as democratic processes are concerned. The total score makes up 6.10, that has been the worst marker since 1998 up to 2011. Eventually, the index has decreased by 0.9. Calamitous failures in democratic transformation are displayed in accordance with such markers as “Political Participation” (–1.8) and “Rule of Law” (–1.3), the “Stateness” marker remaining relatively steady.

Despite drastic qualitative markers deterioration, Ukraine holds on to its position in the group of defective democracies. According to democratic transformation progress Ukraine has become 60th out of 129 countries under analysis.

2014 Report. According to the most recent published report, embracing the period of late 2011 – early 2013, Ukraine has continually displayed steady retrogression in democratic transformation, repeating the indicators of the previous years (6.10). Stagnation processes can be proved by inalterability of all markers. Consequently, Ukraine can be regarded as deficient democracy. On the list of 130 countries Ukraine is ranked 58th.

Over 1998-2013 Ukraine has been utterly unsteady as far as the political institutions performance is concerned. Currently (2015-2016) the country can be referred to as the state with transformational model of political system, having failed to achieve success in democratic development. On the basis of our research it can be stated that the most favourable period for democratic institutions development was the time framework of 2003-2007, the least favourable is the one from 2009 to 2013. The peculiarity of monitoring is the omission of processes, occurring at the end of 2013 – the beginning of 2014, that predetermined the fall of oligarchic-bureaucratic authoritarianism in Ukraine.

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