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## THE PECULIARITIES OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTATION IN THE CITY OF ODESA AND THE ODESA REGION

### ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ЗДІЙСНЕННЯ МІСЦЕВОГО САМОВРЯДУВАННЯ В МІСТІ ОДЕСІ ТА В ОДЕСЬКІЙ ОБЛАСТІ

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*Balan O.S., Tkach K.I., Hratiotova H.O., Dombrovska V.M. Особливості здійснення місцевого самоврядування в місті Одесі та в Одеській області. Оглядова стаття.*

Місцеве самоврядування є важливою складовою демократичної системи в Україні. Одеса та Одеська область не є винятком. У цій статті розглянуто особливості здійснення місцевого самоврядування в Одесі та Одеській області. Однією з особливостей здійснення місцевого самоврядування в Одесі та Одеській області є наявність багатьох місцевих ініціатив та громадських організацій, які активно долучаються до розвитку своїх територій. Це дозволяє залучити більше ресурсів та ідей для вирішення проблем, з якими стикаються місто та область. У разі успішного здійснення місцевого самоврядування в Одесі та Одеській області, це може стати прикладом для інших регіонів України. Однак, для досягнення успіху, необхідно забезпечити ефективне функціонування місцевих органів влади, підвищити рівень участі громадян у процесі.

*Ключові слова:* місцеве самоврядування, Одеса, Одеська область, міська рада, громадськість, децентралізація, реформа місцевого самоврядування, повноваження місцевої влади, бюджет місцевого самоврядування, місцеві вибори

*Balan O.S., Tkach K.I., Hratiotova H.O., Dombrovska V.M. The Peculiarities of Local Self-Government Implementation in the City of Odesa and the Odesa Region. Review article.*

Local self-government is an important component of the democratic system in Ukraine, and Odesa and the Odesa region are no exception. This article examines the peculiarities of local self-government in Odesa and the Odesa region. One of the peculiarities of local self-government in Odesa and the Odesa region is the presence of many local initiatives and community organizations that actively participate in their territories' development. This allows for more resources and ideas to be mobilized to address the problems faced by the city and region. If local self-government is successfully implemented in Odesa and the Odesa region, it could serve as an example for other regions in Ukraine. However, in order to achieve success, it is necessary to ensure the effective functioning of local government bodies, to increase the level of citizens' participation in the decentralization process, reform local self-government, define the powers of local authorities, establish the local self-government budget, and conduct local elections.

*Keywords:* local self-government, Odesa, the Odesa region, city council, community, decentralization, local self-government reform, local government powers, local self-government budget, local elections

The problem facing local self-government in Odesa and the Odesa region is the need to ensure the effective functioning of local authorities and increase the level of citizen participation in the decision-making process. It is also important to ensure a sufficient level of funding for local projects and attract more resources to solve the problems facing the city and the region. It is necessary to find effective ways of implementing decentralization and reforming local self-government in order to ensure the sustainable growth of territories and improve the citizens' life quality.

#### Analysis of recent researches and publications

Studying the peculiarities of local self-government in the Odesa region will help to identify problematic aspects and ways to solve them, increase the efficiency of local authorities and provide comfortable living conditions for residents.

Such domestic scientists as Ye.R. Bezsmertnyi, S.V. Boldyriev, V. Bardeniuk, B. Bilyk, O. Batanov [1], A. Bobylieva, V. Hrobova [2], A. Ivanskyi [3], N. Kaminska [5], H. Klimova, I. Korniienko, Yu. Kyrychenko [6], A. Oliinyk, A. Suprun, A. Senchuk, A. Selivanova, A. Serohin, H. Chapala, K. Sheremet, O. Yarmysh and others dedicated their works to the scientific development of this issue.

The aim of the article is to study the peculiarities of local self-government implementation in Odesa and in the Odesa region, as well as to identify

problematic aspects and propose the ways to solve them.

The object of the study is the process of local self-government in Odesa and in the Odesa region.

The subject of the study is the peculiarities of local self-government implementation in Odesa and in the Odesa region, their positive and negative aspects, development trends and problematic aspects that need to be solved.

### The main part

Local self-government is an important component of a democratic society, which ensures the effective interaction of local authorities with residents and stimulates regions' development. The Odesa region is one of the leading tourist and economic centres of Ukraine, and Odesa is one of the largest cities in the country. Therefore, studying the peculiarities of local self-government in Odesa and in the Odesa region is a very relevant and important task.

This research paper is dedicated to studying the process of local self-government in the Odesa region, as well as identifying the problematic aspects and the ways to solve them. The paper will consider the peculiarities of functioning the local self-government

bodies, analyze various mechanisms of interaction between local authorities and residents, and also consider the financial and economic aspects of local self-government in the Odesa region [4].

The study will be conducted on the basis of the analysis of statistical data, documents and scientific publications on this topic. The results of the study can be useful for local authorities, residents and all parties concerned in improving local self-government processes in Odesa and in the Odesa region (Table 1).

The Odesa region and the city of Odesa have their own peculiarities of local self-government, which are determined by their geographical and economic situation, cultural and historical traditions, as well as existing legislation.

One of the peculiarities of local self-government in the Odesa region is that there are several cities with the status of regional importance on its territory, which have their own local self-government bodies and corresponding powers. Thus, local self-government in the Odesa region has a complex structure that requires effective coordination between the city and regional authorities.

Table 1. Key Indicators of Local Self-Government Implementation in Odesa and the Odesa Region

Indicator	Odesa	The Odesa region
Number of residents	993 120 (according to the data of 2021)	2 386 152 (according to the data of 2021)
Number of city districts	5	17
Number of amalgamated territorial communities	0	38
Number of urban public organizations	251 (as of 2021)	There is no overall figure
Local self-government budget (2021)	5,2 billion UAH	12,4 billion UAH
Level of citizens' participation in local self-government processes	Law	Increases gradually

Source: compiled by authors on materials [4]

As for Odesa, there is an active development of municipal property, in particular, the programme of municipal property privatization and investments attraction from private investors is being implemented. In addition, the city has a large number of investment projects that require effective management by local authorities.

One of the most important features of local self-government in the Odesa region is the residents' involvement in making important decisions and implementing projects related to their region. In particular, mechanisms of public control and public discussion of local self-government bodies decisions operate in the region, which helps to ensure greater openness and transparency in decision-making and strengthens citizens' trust in local authorities. The main principles of city self-government are [5]:

- people's power;
- legality;
- publicity;
- collegiality;
- combination of local and state interests;
- electability;
- legal, organizational and material and financial independence of the city self-government within the limits of the granted powers;

- accountability and responsibility of city self-government bodies and their officials to the city community;
- state support and city self-government guarantees;
- judicial protection of the city's self-government rights.

It should also be noted that the Odesa region has significant potential for tourism and cultural industry development, which creates additional opportunities for local self-government development. In order to ensure effective management of these areas, it is necessary to implement modern approaches to tourism and culture development, as well as to ensure the actions coordination of local and regional authorities in these matters [2].

Finally, it is important to note that the local self-government implementation in the Odesa region and Odesa should be aimed at providing quality services to residents, raising their living standards, and creating conditions for the effective development of the economy and business in the region. In order to achieve these goals, it is necessary to develop and implement strategies for the of cities and regions development, taking into account their peculiarities and potential.

An important aspect of the local self-government implementation in Odesa and the Odesa region is the intercultural harmony provision and public activity development. The Odesa region is multinational, and representatives of various cultures and nationalities live in Odesa. The task of local authorities is to create conditions for developing intercultural dialogue and cooperation, the minority rights protection and supporting the cultural development of various population groups.

In the future, the main attention was being paid to the problems of improving the current legislation in order to solve the issues of redistribution and clear demarcation of powers between central and local bodies of executive power and local self-government bodies in favour of the latter, establishing mechanisms for delegating the executive bodies powers to local self-government bodies, forming effective, resourced territorial communities, etc.

With the intention to improve the cooperation between local self-government bodies and central bodies of executive power, the President established the Council of City Mayors under the President of Ukraine. In order to implement the reform of local self-government, and improve the quality of human life by creating conditions for the sustainable development of territorial communities as independent and capable social communities, the members of which will have the opportunity to effectively protect their own rights and interests by participating in solving issues of local importance, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Concept of local self-government reforms [4].

It should also be noted that performing the local self-government functions in Odesa and the Odesa region should be based on the principles of openness, transparency, and interaction with the public. It is necessary to actively involve citizens in decision-making and monitor the work of local authorities. For this, it is necessary to develop mechanisms of public control and ensure public access to information about local authorities' activity [3].

In international practice, a widespread institutional model of community cooperation with higher-level public administration bodies is contracts conclusion that allow linking local politics with national priorities, promote the community responsibility development and participative national development, re-legitimize state policy in conditions of decentralization, and facilitate the coordination of effective tested mechanisms implementation of the local authorities powers granted to the community, distribute the weight of large projects and their risks to the community qualification, such a contract can focus either on preventing opportunistic behaviour (determining mutual obligations) or on implementation.

In Ukraine, the instrument of agreements on regional development introduced by the law "On Stimulating the Development of Regions" turned out to be unviable. 6 agreements are recorded in the register of the Ministry of Economic Development, in which very general and standard priority areas of

agreed activities are defined. It seems more expedient to conclude special agreements of a sectoral direction, which can be especially useful in the process of implementing sectoral decentralization, or for solving certain significant problems of a national nature that have a regional dimension. In this context, communities can act as individual parties to agreements, as well as co-participants in their implementation, which is provided for by the content of the agreement. Therefore, it is necessary to supplement the current legislation with the normalization of a wider range of agreements, including direct participation of the communities.

Likewise, the instrument provided by the law for programmes to overcome depressed areas turned out to be unviable – not a single one was concluded. The established criteria for determining the depressed nature of territories did not allow any territory to be recognized as depressed. Only after the law amendment in 2011, for the first time, 4 cities of regional importance were classified as depressed, and an official government decision was made, in 2012 it was proposed to give such status to 8 more cities, which, however, was not done. It is advisable to continue the correction of the criteria for determining the territories' depression, with the possible establishment of the types of depression in view of its genesis (old industrial, labour shortage, ecologically dangerous, etc.) and the specification of tools that can be applied to such communities [4].

Therefore, local self-government implementation in Odesa and the Odesa region is a complex and multifaceted process that should be based on openness, transparency, and interaction with the public, culture and tourism development, ensuring intercultural harmony and effective management of local resources (Fig. 1).

One of the examples of local self-government implementation in Odesa is the Odesa City Council creation, which consists of 64 deputies and performs a legislative function at the local level. With the help of various committees and commissions, the city council makes decisions on budget, infrastructure development, security and public order, health care, culture and education, green construction, etc.

In passing, it should be noted that strengthening the capacity and expanding the powers of the amalgamated territorial community (hereinafter ATC) should be considered necessary and extremely important, but it is only one of the components of the state policy of regional development. Even the most successful ATC, developing as a "thing in itself", finds itself in an "institutional trap", reaching the objective limits of its development, which are dictated by the limitation of resource possibilities, organizational capabilities, and ultimately – the peculiarities of the local mentality. Not to mention the average ATC, for which the expansion of competences, spheres of responsibility and even resource provision often happens faster than the growth of their professional organizational capabilities.

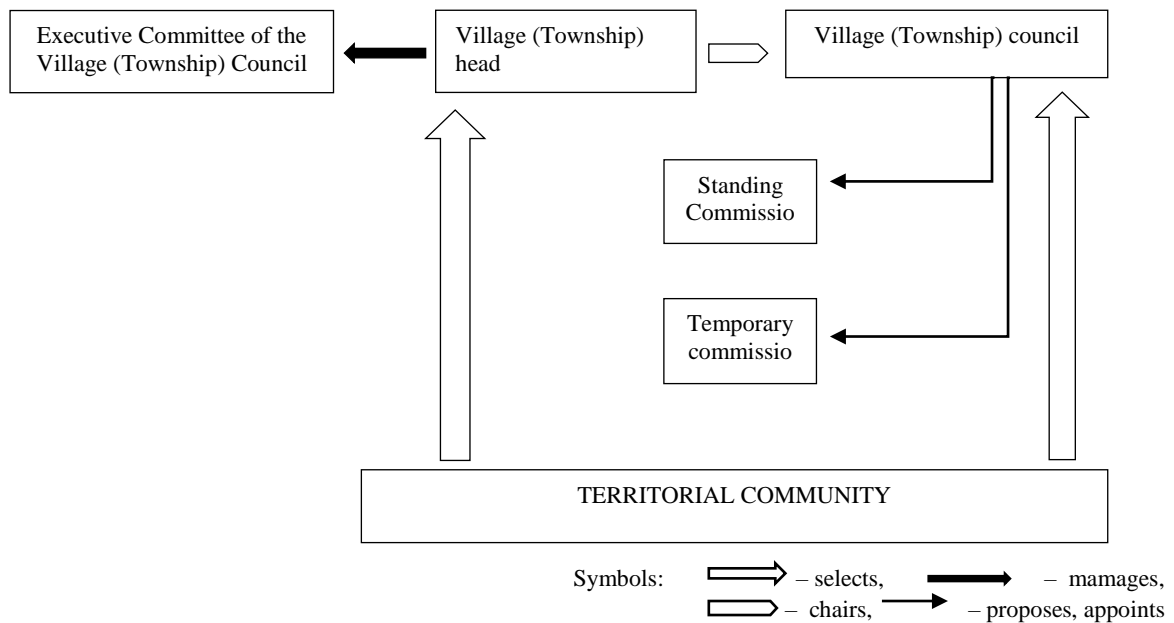


Figure 1. Local Self-Government Bodies Structure  
 Source: compiled by authors on materials [4]

Proper disclosure of the territorial development potential is possible only when the communities empowerment is combined with a clear definition of the place of each ATC in the system of economic relations in the region, and the region’s development in the national social and economic development. Therefore, an important task of the state policy of regional development is the tasks conversion of the country’s modernization into specific modernization tasks of the regions’ development, provided for by the relevant regional strategies, and integration with these strategies is the key to the success of strategizing the amalgamated communities development. The interregional (interterritorial) synergy achievement is one of the foundations of "smart" approaches inherent

in the modern European model of regional development policy [4].

Another example is the municipal authorities’ initiative to develop tourism in Odesa. To do this, a special department was created, which deals with tourist infrastructure development, international tourist events organization and promoting the city as a tourist destination.

As for the Odesa region, an example of local self-government can be a regional energy efficiency programme establishment, which provides for improving the energy efficiency of residential buildings, increasing the energy efficiency of production and transport, using renewable energy sources, etc.

Table 2. Stages of Local Self-Government Implementation in the City of Odesa and Odesa Region

Stages of Local Self-Government Implementation	Description
Stage 1: Decentralization	As part of the local self-government reform in Ukraine, power was decentralized with the aim of transferring powers and resources to local authorities. In Odesa and Odesa region, this contributed to an increase in the number of local councils’ powers and an increase in their budget.
Stage 2: Elaboration and approval of city and region’s development programmes	Local councils play an important role in the elaboration and approval of city and regional development programmes. These programmes reflect priorities and tasks for the territories development and determine the resources necessary for their implementation.
Stage 3: Conducting local elections	Local elections are an important stage in the local self-government implementation. This allows to choose representatives who will reflect the community’s interests and fulfill their powers in accordance with the legislation and development programmes.
Stage 4: City and region’s development programmes implementation	After the development programmes approval, the local government must implement them. This can be done by attracting investments, developing and implementing projects, improving infrastructure and the social sphere.
Stage 5: Interaction with the public	Local government should interact with the public

Source: compiled by authors on materials [7]

The main characteristic feature of the local self-government system, implemented at the level of territorial communities of villages, townships, and

cities, is that it has its continuation at the regional level, in district and regional councils – local self-government bodies that represent the common



interests of territorial communities of villages, cities, towns, as well as at the micro level (houses, quarters, streets, micro-districts, individual villages, which are united with other settlements into one administrative-territorial unit – the village council), as well as the population's self-organization bodies – house, quarter, street, village committees, neighbourhood committees, etc. [7].

Another example is the Odesa Regional Council creation, which united city and village councils in the region and aims to coordinate the territories' development, ensure interaction between local self-government bodies and regulate relations between different territories [7].

For effective local self-government implementation in Odesa and Odesa region, it is necessary to take into account various challenges and problems faced by local authorities. Such problems include the low quality of communal services, inefficient use of budget funds, corruption, insufficient attention to environmental issues, underdevelopment of transport and social infrastructure, and others.

In order to solve these problems, it is important to ensure the local authorities' interaction with the public and business representatives, taking into account their interests and needs. It is also necessary to improve the legislative framework on local self-government issues, ensuring greater independence and financial stability of local authorities [8].

As a result, improving the system of local self-government in Odesa and the Odesa region can help to solve important socio-economic and environmental problems at the level of the territorial community, providing the city and region's residents with high-quality communal services, increasing employment, and ensuring sustainable development.

In order to effectively implement local self-government in Odesa and the Odesa region, it is also necessary to develop a system of public participation and control over local authorities' activities. The public can be included in decision-making processes and influence their implementation, which will ensure greater responsibility of local authorities to the city and region's residents.

The peculiarity of the constitutional principles of local self-government, as a regulatory law, consists in establishing positive rules of conduct, in the legal organization of social relations and ensuring the social relations coordination in relation to local self-government.

Their action can be traced to the influence of the law on social relations through their consolidation in the form of a legal institution of local self-government. Then the regulatory law legally consolidates, clearly converts into the number of regulated social relations, which are the basis of the stable and normal existence of society, correspond to the interests of its majority, and express the general will. Therefore, we conclude that the constitutional principles of local self-government have features of the regulatory law principles [8].

It is also important to ensure the local economic development and supporting entrepreneurial activity, which will contribute to the growth of local budget revenues and the population's socio-economic situation improvement.

For example, one of the successful examples of local self-government in Odesa is the "Participatory Budget" project, which provides for the allocation of part of the city budget for implementing the projects chosen by the community itself. This project ensures greater accountability of local authorities to the city's residents and increases the level of public participation in the decision-making process.

The abovementioned refers to the understanding of the system of local self-government in general. But the system of local self-government in legal science is considered, and in a narrow sense, as the system of local self-government of a specific village, township, or city.

Thus, the system of local self-government is understood as the organizational and legal mechanism for local self-government implementation within the boundaries of a separate self-governing administrative-territorial unit - village, township, city – whose territorial communities act as independent subjects of local self-government [8].

Hence, taking into account the various challenges and problems facing local authorities in Odesa and the Odesa region, it is important to develop the system of local self-government, ensuring the local authorities' interaction with the public and business, the local economic development, and increasing the level of public participation in the decision-making process [5].

Therefore, the local self-government implementation in Odesa and the Odesa region requires a thorough analysis and many problems solution related to the efficiency of the local authorities' activities, local economic development, and interaction with the public and business. Considering these challenges, it is necessary to constantly improve the mechanisms of local self-government and develop a system of public participation and control over the work of local authorities. This will allow to create an effective and open management system that will contribute to the growth of the population's living standard and the city and the region's development as a whole.

Local self-government implementation is an important component of a democratic society and aims to ensure effective and responsible governance at the local level.

The city of Odesa and the Odesa region have their own peculiarities in the local self-government implementation, related to their history, geographical location and socio-economic characteristics.

Despite the existing difficulties and challenges, local authorities in Odesa and the Odesa region continue to play an important role in solving local problems and providing comfortable conditions for the citizens' life and development. The local self-government effectiveness depends on the interaction of local authorities with the public and business, as

well as on the development of mechanisms for public participation and control over the local authorities' activities [9].

In order to ensure the effective implementation of local self-government in Odesa and the Odesa region, it is necessary to constantly improve the management system, develop institutions of public participation and control over the local authorities' activities, as well as promote the development of the local economy and social infrastructure.

Another important conclusion is that local self-government is a necessary component of territorial development and the improvement of citizens' life quality. This is possible only under the condition of responsible and competent performance by local self-government bodies of their powers. It is also important to develop and implement effective mechanisms for involving the public in decision-making related to their territory development [6].

Based on the above mentioned, it can be said that the local self-government guarantees represent a system by which we understand a set of conditions and means that ensure the effective and efficient implementation of the rights enshrined in local self-government by the Constitution and Laws of Ukraine and the proper performance of assigned duties [9].

The purpose of state guarantees for the constitutional principles implementation of local self-government is to ensure the organizational and material and financial independence of local self-government bodies when solving issues of local importance; in protecting the self-government rights and creating favourable conditions for their fuller realization.

In Ukraine, there is an active implementation of European municipal standards and rules to the national legislation, which regulates the local self-government bodies activities and promotes their adoption of scientifically based state-authority decisions aimed at solving urgent issues in various areas of life of the local community that arise in the relevant administrative-territorial units.

Attention was focused on the fact that the further effective implementation of administrative-territorial and regional reforms, constructive social partnership implementation between the centre and the territories is impossible without updating the relevant regulatory and legal framework in the specified area, which requires improvement on the basis of strengthening organizational, legal, financial and material, administrative autonomy of local self-government and the European model development of the administrative-territorial system, based on the principles of subsidiarity, decentralization and citizens' involvement in making management decisions. After all, the special purpose and area of activity of local self-government bodies determines the construction of a unique system of regulatory framework, which includes legislative sources of different legal force and nature of origin.

The most important for the guarantee of local self-government is the substantive rules of the law, which regulate important issues of the market economy,

construction, transport, environmental protection, cultural heritage protection, housing, etc. In all the listed issues, the government outlines the limits of regulation and conditions of activity, and local self-government bodies must adapt to them [10].

The state authority should clearly understand that the relations between local self-government and the government are equal, independent subjects of public law, each of which has its own powers and areas of activity.

In general, local self-government in Odesa and in the Odesa region has its own peculiarities and challenges, but at the same time it provides a large number of opportunities for the development of the territory and improvement of the quality of life of citizens. It is important to support and develop local self-government, ensuring that authorities fulfill their powers and involving the public in decision-making.

In addition, an important factor in the successful functioning of local self-government is the sufficient funding provision at the level of local budgets. The implementation of projects and programmes aimed at community development depends on this. It is also necessary to take into account the needs and interests of different segments of the population when making decisions at the local level.

In addition, it is important to ensure the openness and transparency of the local self-government bodies activities. Providing access to information about the decisions and actions of local authorities will contribute to increasing citizens' trust in authorities and reducing corruption.

So, we can conclude that local self-government in Odesa and in the Odesa region is important for the territory development and the citizens' life quality improvement. It is necessary to ensure effective performance by local self-government bodies of their powers, involve the public in decision-making and provide sufficient funding at the level of local budgets. It is also important to ensure the openness and transparency of the local self-government bodies' activities [10].

All elements of the local self-government system are interconnected, and the absence of one of the elements will lead to the integrity violation of the entire system, the normatively established foundations of this institution of the constitutional system contain all the signs of the system.

The Constitution of Ukraine establishes that local self-government is carried out by the territorial community in accordance with the procedure established by law, both directly and through local self-government bodies: village, settlement, city councils and their executive bodies [10].

In general, effective local self-government in Odesa and in the Odesa region is a key factor in the territory development and improvement of the citizens' life quality. On the way to achieving this goal, government structures must work for the community's benefit and ensure its citizens' needs and interests realization.

The result of the correct and effective activity of local self-government bodies will be a favourable

socio-economic environment creation that will contribute to the development of the territory and ensure a comfortable life for citizens.

Ukraine is on course to build a sovereign and independent, democratic, social, legal state, and civil society formation. In order to achieve the set goal, a complex solution of political, social, legal, ideological, and economic issues and a systematic reformation of all areas of social life is necessary.

Local self-government is one of the important elements of state and social livelihood and development, and the practical implementation of the local self-government constitutional principles is an important step towards the establishment and development of a legal state and civil society [11].

### Conclusions

So, within the framework of this paper, we have analyzed the peculiarities of local self-government in t Odesa and in the Odesa region. It turned out that

today the power structures are increasingly aware of the importance of the local self-government development and its positive impact on the socio-economic development of the territory and the citizens' life quality improvement.

However, despite this, there are problems that complicate the work of local self-government bodies, such as insufficient funding, lack of qualified personnel, bureaucratic obstacles, etc. Therefore, it is important to continue working on their solution and ensuring the effective functioning of local self-government bodies.

In general, local self-government in Odesa and the Odesa region is an important tool for achieving territorial development and ensuring the well-being of citizens. For this, it is important to continue working on improving the legislation and ensuring the effective functioning of local self-government bodies, taking into account the citizens' needs and interests.

### Abstract

The problem facing local self-government in the city of Odesa and the Odesa region is the need to ensure the effective functioning of local authorities and increase the level of citizens' participation in the decision-making process. It is also important to ensure a sufficient level of funding for local projects and attract more resources to solve the problems facing the city and the region. It is necessary to find effective ways of implementing decentralization and reforming local self-government in order to ensure the sustainable growth of territories and improve the citizens' quality of life.

Local self-government is an important constituent element of a democratic society, which ensures the effective interaction of local authorities with residents and stimulates the regions' development. The Odesa region is one of the leading tourist and economic centres of Ukraine, and the city of Odesa is one of the largest cities in the country. Therefore, studying the local self-government peculiarities in Odesa and in the Odesa, region is a very relevant and important task.

As Odesa, there is an active development of municipal property, in particular, a privatization programme of communal property and investments attraction from private investors is being implemented. In addition, the city has a large number of investment projects that require effective management by local authorities.

It should also be noted that the Odesa region has significant potential for tourism and cultural industry development, which creates additional opportunities for local self-government development. In order to ensure effective management of these areas, it is necessary to implement modern approaches to tourism and culture development, as well as to ensure the coordination of actions of local and regional authorities in these matters

Local self-government in Odesa and in the Odesa region is important for the territory development and improvement of the citizens' life quality improvement. It is necessary to ensure the effective performance of local self-government bodies, to involve the public in decision-making, and to ensure sufficient funding at the level of local budgets. It is also important to ensure the openness and transparency of the activities of local self-government bodies.

In general, local self-government in Odesa and the Odesa region is an important tool for achieving territorial development and ensuring the citizens' well-being. For this, it is important to continue working on improving legislation and ensuring the effective functioning of local self-government bodies, taking into account the citizens' needs and interests.

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