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EUROPEANIZATION OF UKRAINE'S EXECUTIVE POWER

(Lessons of the Central and Eastern Europe's EU Member States)

ЄВРОПЕЙЗАЦІЯ ВИКОНАВЧОЇ ВЛАДИ УКРАЇНИ

(Уроки держав Центральної та Східної Європи -членів ЄС)

ЕВРОПЕЙЗАЦИЯ ИСПОЛНИТЕЛЬНОЙ ВЛАСТИ УКРАИНЫ

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Abstract. *The article addresses main OECD SIGMA recommendations regarding national European Union (EU) policy co-ordination in Ukraine and provides relevant lessons from Latvia and other EU Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) Member States in addressing similar challenges from the EU pre-accession and post-accession experience.*

Efficiency of a national policy co-ordination is one of the core determinants to succeed europeanization of a national core executive power and further integration with the EU. The OECD SIGMA Baseline Measurement Assessment Report on Principles of Public Administration in Ukraine published in June 2018 reveals important concerns in steering and co-ordination of some reform initiatives, overlapping competences of public bodies in co-ordinating policy planning and implementation monitoring of the Government's performance in public sector reforms.

Effective implementation of national reforms is vital also in the terms of implementation of the Ukraine–EU Association Agreement (AA) that entered into force on September 1, 2017 and

requires a high level of coordination in the Ukrainian government. Relevant national EU policy co-ordination experience of the EU CEE Member States is revisited as a possible lesson for Ukraine in implementation of essential structural reforms on the national level.

Key words: *europeanization, Association Agreement, principles of public administration, national policy co-ordination, policy planning*

Анотація. *У статті розглядаються основні рекомендації ОЕСР SIGMA щодо координації національної політики Європейського Союзу (ЄС) в Україні та робляться відповідні уроки на досвіді Латвії та інших держав-членів ЄС у країнах Центральної та Східної Європи (ЦСЄ) для вирішення подібних завдань перед вступом та після вступу до ЄС.*

Ефективність координації національної політики є однією з основних детермінант успіху європеїзації національної виконавчої влади та подальшої інтеграції з ЄС. Оцінка ОЕСР SIGMA, опублікована у звіті про оцінку базових вимірів принципів державного управління в Україні у червні 2018 року, виявляє важливі питання щодо управління та координації деяких ініціатив з реформування компетенції державних органів у координації планування політики та моніторингу впровадження результатів діяльності уряду щодо реформування державної служби. Ефективна координація політики досягається за умов політичної підтримки на постійній основі. Призначений Координаційний орган повинен мати високі повноваження для спільного вирішення міністерствами і навіть міністрами ключових питань.

Вивчення та творча імплементація досвіду країн-членів Центральної та Східної Європи ЄС може полегшити процес національних реформ в Україні та впровадження Угоди про Асоціацію. Україні потрібно проводити систематичну роботу над втіленням в практику програми інтеграції до ЄС, що допоможе країні досягти європейського рівня та тісно взаємодіяти з країнами-членами ЄС. Важливо також організувати регулярні тематичні сесії уряду щодо процесу інтеграції в ЄС, посилити роль законодавчого процесу для розвитку проєвропейського політичного середовища та його взаємодії з суспільством.

Ефективне впровадження національних реформ є життєве важливим і в умовах реалізації Угоди про асоціацію між Україною та Європейським Союзом, яка набула чинності 1 вересня 2017 року і вимагає високого рівня координації в українському уряді. Аналізується відповідний національний досвід координації політики ЄС в Латвії та інших країнах-членах ЦСЄ, оскільки отримані уроки в координації впровадження структурних реформ на національному рівні важливі для України. Розглядаються варіанти створення рекомендації щодо планування та моніторингу допомоги ЄС для кращої підтримки адміністративних реформ на наступних етапах процесу інтеграції до ЄС.

Ключові слова: *європеїзація, Угода про асоціацію, принципи державного управління, координація національної політики, планування політики*

Аннотация. *В статье рассматриваются основные рекомендации ОЭСР SIGMA по координации национальной политики Европейского Союза (ЕС) в Украине и приводятся соответствующие уроки Латвии и других стран-членов ЕС в Центральной и Восточной Европе (ЦВЕ) в решении аналогичных проблем до и после вступления в ЕС.*

Эффективность координации национальной политики является одним из ключевых факторов успеха европеизации национальной исполнительной власти и дальнейшей интеграции с ЕС. Опубликованная в ОЭСР оценка SIGMA «Отчет об оценке базовых измерений принципов государственного управления в Украине в июне 2018 года» выявила важные проблемы в управлении и координации некоторых инициатив по реформированию компетенций государственных органов в координации планирования политики, мониторинга реализации политики и деятельности правительства по реформированию государственной службы.

Эффективное осуществление национальных реформ имеет жизненно важное значение также с точки зрения выполнения Соглашения об ассоциации между Украиной и Европейским Союзом (ЕС), которое вступило в силу 1 сентября 2017 года, и требует высокого уровня координации в украинском правительстве. Анализируется соответствующий национальный опыт координации политики ЕС в Латвии и других странах-членах ЦВЕ, рассматриваются возможные уроки для Украины по координации осуществления основных структурных реформ на национальном уровне.

Ключевые слова: *европеизация, соглашение об ассоциации, принципы государственного управления, координация национальной политики, планирование политики.*

Statement of the problem: One of the key requirements for the EU integration policy planning and co-ordination is that the Centre-of-Government (CoG) institutions fulfil all functions critical to a well-organized, consistent and competent policy-making system. Its main indicator is the fulfilment level of EU integration co-ordination functions by the CoG institutions. As the administrative-level co-ordination mechanism for the EU integration has not been established and political-level co-ordination is not fully functional, the fulfilment of EU integration co-ordination functions by the CoG institutions in the Government of Ukraine requires further drastic improvements. Another key requirement on policy planning and co-ordination is that policy planning is harmonized, aligned with the government's financial circumstances and ensures that the government is able to achieve its objectives. The quality of policy planning for the EU integration in Ukraine is below satisfactory because alignment between the Action Plan for Implementation of the Association Agreement (APIAA) and the Government Priority Action Plan (GPAP) is limited and calculation of implementation rate of activities is not possible due to vague formulation of commitments.

Analysis of recent studies and publications: Many studies on EU relations with CEE countries have been developed since the mid-1990s, but they have primarily focused on the EU pre-accession phase and the emphasis on 'adapting' to EU requirements. Within this framework, researchers have focused on the EU enlargement negotiations, the reform process, progress on EU legal approximation and implementation of EU policies in the later EU Member States, the consequences of EU enlargement, EU governance, government analysis in the candidate countries and the EU influence on public administration at the national level.

Europeanisation of national EU policy coordination mechanisms in the 2004 EU enlargement attracts much attention of researchers [Dimitrova and Toshkov, 2009; Hafner, 2014; Gäther, Hörner and Obholzer, 2011; Kassim, Peters and Wright, 2000; Laffan, 2003; Lippert and Umbach, 2005; Panke, 2010; Rollis, 2014; Ugur, 2013; Zubek and Staronova, 2012], but is not yet systematically studied in the European academic literature. Despite the fact that coordination systems are able to provide technical assistance and strategic expertise to ministries on EU law and to carry out monitoring and "early warning" of the overall level of implementation of EU law in the country, their capacities to promote conflict resolution between different executive powers [Dimitrova and Toshkov, 2009: 3] were not fully studied by the researchers.

Statement of the objectives of the article: Identify the main discrepancies on national EU policy planning and co-ordination in the OECD SIGMA Baseline Measurement Assessment Report [OECD SIGMA, 2018] on implementation of Principles of Public Administration in Ukraine. Revise relevant national EU policy co-ordination experience in Latvia and other EU CEE Member States and share the main lesson for Ukraine in co-ordinating essential structural reforms on the national level in the framework of Ukraine–European Union Association Agreement (AA) (signed on 21 March 2014) that entered into force on September 1, 2017 and requires a high level of policy coordination in the Ukrainian government.

Presentation of basic materials.

Introduction

Europeanisation can be described as a structural change that has a multiplier effect in the EU Member, Candidate or Association States on various executive bodies and actors, associated with this impact, which in many ways affect various institutions and actors, their functions, ideas and interests in the country. Policy coordination is needed for effective management of national reforms. In efficient management, government programs allow for the successful integration of different policies. Interacting policies can be designed to create synergies or at least reduce institutional conflicts [Candel and Biesbroek, 2016]. Metcalfe points out that national governments that are well-coordinated are more effective, have less conflicting and useless programs, and are able to use resources more rationally to achieve their political goals [Metcalfe, 1994]. The need for coordination arises when decisions in one program or institution consider decisions made in other programs or institutions and minimize the likelihood of conflict through their actions. F. Scharpf has named it negative co-ordination [Scharpf, 1994]. In turn, positive co-ordination requires institutions to take proactive action to do more than just avoid conflicts and seek ways of working together to find solutions that benefit all institutions and their clients [Scharpf, 1994].

National EU policy involves developing and defending national interests at the EU level and implementation at the national one. The task of coordination within the framework of national EU policy is to achieve effective interaction between different positions, activities or events of different institutions and officials in the identification and implementation of national interests. The dynamics of development of public administration in the EU today and in its Member States marks increasing external and internal pressure on the executive power to coordinate national EU policy making. Governments must be able to manage a wider range of functions and more complex activities within their competencies as the public administration mechanism becomes more complex.

Effective coordination on the part of government delivers greater efficiency, because it ensures that scarce resources are used rationally in the pursuit of policy goals, that the waste resulting from the duplication of effort or persistence of redundant programs is avoided. Poor coordination, by contrast, is likely to result in chaos, delay, and inefficiency.

According to H. Kassim's classification, countries can be divided into four main types: 1) comprehensive centralizers; 2) selective centralizers; 3) overlapping decentralizers; 4) selective decentralizers [Kassim, 2015; Kassim, 2003].

First, H. Kassim classifies policy coordination systems according to the **degree of centralization** of the system. The main differences between a centralized and decentralized EU case management model are the existence/absence of one (strong) central coordinating unit that coordinates the work of all sectoral ministries; existence/absence of several complementary coordinating units in the national public administration system; a particularly separate/undivided model of policy coordination at national level, where it involves a country with a complex structure or federal one that requires special system adaptation.

In centralized systems, specialized bodies at the CoG are responsible for overall coordination. Particularly in the case of conflicts between different line ministries or departments, the coordinating unit engages in the actual decision making or reconciliation. The ambition of the centralized system is to speak with one voice, ensuring a unified representation of the position from all the national representatives involved. In contrast, decentralized systems lack a central coordinating unit with sufficient authority. In the case of sectoral units that promote inter-institutional coordination, the concerned individual line institutions remain relatively independent. In order to achieve the degree of centralization of the co-ordination system, the strength of the central coordinating unit over specific line ministries is decisive.

There are different types of decentralized and centralized models, ranging from the transition from relative or complete autonomy of individual ministries (the principle of the leading ministry) to the central role of the central government-specific institutions on EU issues. The centralized co-ordination model means that cross-sectoral discussions, harmonization within the Member State and negotiation at all EU levels are provided by one institution that is independent or directly subordinated to the Prime Minister, which ensures coherence in the work of individual

ministries. On the contrary, the decentralized model of EU affairs coordination is based on the principle of autonomy of individual ministries and a central executive body responsible for cross-sectoral coordination or preparing a common nation position. In a decentralized model, each line ministry is solely responsible for coordinating its policy area in the sector.

Second, H. Kassim classifies policy coordination systems according to the **degree of comprehensiveness**. Comprehensive systems tend to reach an agreement on almost every issue related to the EU. Interest groups, social partners and local administrations are usually involved in the formulation of mandates. They often engage proactively in the initial phase of a policy cycle. Compared to the ambitious system, the coverage of selective systems is rather modest. Emphasis is placed on the most important issues and the government is the key determinant of the position. In addition, the focus is on the decision-making phase within the EU Council, where national representatives defend their national positions.

Europeanization puts a pressure also to the Association countries to carefully plan and coordinate action to achieve better representation of interests with the EU depending on their Europeanization level. Europeanization increases also the level of national executive power and responsibility. Governments need to be practically ready to ensure synchronized action at national level, coherence in drafting proposals with the EU level and in justification of national interests.

The OECD SIGMA program developed the Principles of Public Administration in 2014 to support the European Commission's (EC) reinforced approach to public administration reform (PAR) in the EU enlargement, and in 2015 further developed them to advance PAR within the context of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) [OECD SIGMA, 2017b]. The Principles define what good public governance entails in practice and outline the main requirements that the countries should follow during EU integration. The monitoring framework makes it possible to set country benchmarks [OECD SIGMA, 2017a] and regularly analyse progress in applying the Principles.

The OECD SIGMA published Baseline Measurement Assessment Report on Principles of Public Administration in Ukraine in June 2018 [OECD SIGMA, 2018: 4]. It reveals important concerns in the steering and co-ordination of some reform initiatives and overlapping competences of public bodies in co-ordinating policy planning and implementation.

1. Situation on national EU policy planning and co-ordination in the Government of Ukraine

One of the OECD SIGMA Baseline Measurement Assessment Report areas is national EU policy planning and co-ordination capacity. All critical functions related to the EU integration have been assigned to the Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration (GOEEAI) and are performed in practice. The legal framework for the functioning of EU integration co-ordination is established in the statutes of GOEEAI [CMU, 2014c]. However, overlaps exist between the mandates of the CoG institutions such as Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers (SCMU) [CMU, 2009], the Ministry of Finance [CMU, 2014a], the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) [CMU, 2014b] and GOEEAI regarding co-ordination of policy planning and monitoring the Government's performance. In 2017, also separate directorates for Strategic Planning and European Integration were established in 10 out of 18 ministries.

One of the key requirements for the EU integration policy planning and co-ordination is that the CoG institutions fulfil all functions critical to a well-organized, consistent and competent policy-making system. One of its main indicators is fulfilment level of EU integration co-ordination functions by the CoG institutions. As the administrative-level co-ordination mechanism for the EU integration has not been established and political-level co-ordination is not fully functional, the value of the indicator measuring the fulfilment of policy co-ordination functions by the CoG institutions set by OECD SIGMA is 3 out of 5 points. Establishment and enforcement of

clear horizontal procedures for governing the national EU integration under the responsible central co-ordination body is measured by a) proportion of the EU integration functions that are assigned to the CoG institutions by law; b) availability of guidelines to line ministries and other government bodies and c) Government's capacity for policy co-ordination, whereas OECD SIGMA for these sub-indicators has assigned 13 out of 18 points [OECD SIGMA, 2018: 23].

The GOEEAI's statute foresees responsibility for overall daily policy co-ordination, planning of related actions, monitoring country's AA implementation and co-ordinating alignment of national legislation with the EU *acquis* [Dimitrova and Toshkov, 2009]. The function for co-ordinating accession negotiations has not been assigned, as Ukraine is not an EU candidate country.

Regulations and methodological guidelines support the line ministries and central executive bodies in the EU integration process. The Rules of Procedure (RoP) of the Cabinet of Ministers (CMU) contain basic instructions on how to ensure alignment between the proposed Ukrainian legislation and the EU *acquis*. The instructions are supported by methodological guidelines developed by the GOEEAI. The CMU has also adopted detailed regulations that stipulate the policy planning process [CMU, 2014a] and for monitoring the implementation of plans [CMU, 2016]. However, no guidelines exist on how to provide inputs to the planning and monitoring of EU assistance.

Another key requirement on policy planning and co-ordination is that the function is harmonized, aligned with the government's financial circumstances and ensures that the government is able to achieve its objectives. It is measured by indicator on quality of policy planning for EU integration, whereas OECD has given assessment 2 out of 5 points. The level of harmonised medium-term planning system for all processes relevant to the EU integration and their integration into domestic policy planning is measured by a) the legal framework that enables harmonized planning of EU integration; b) quality of planning documents for EU integration; c) EU integration-related commitments carried forward and d) implementation rate (%) of the government's plans for EU integration related legislative commitments, whereas OECD SIGMA has assigned 6 out of 16 points [OECD SIGMA, 2018: 33].

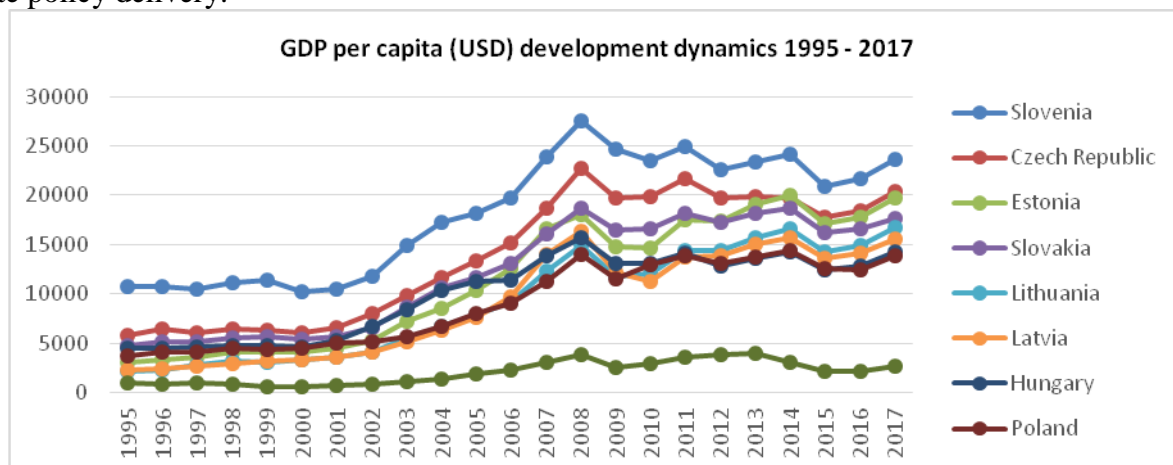
Sectoral meetings take place to co-ordinate implementation of the AA in the 24 areas covered by the AA, but a horizontal administrative-level co-ordination mechanism with line ministries has not been set up. The legal framework does not also stipulate any co-ordination during the APIAA preparation process with the other SCMUD directorates dealing with preparation of the Medium-term Government Priority Action Plan and MTGPAP (the GPAP), or with the MoF. The GOEEAI is in charge of planning and co-ordinating the EU *acquis* alignment, which involves preparing the APIAA and for monitoring its implementation. However, it is consulted only when proposals are submitted to the CMU for decision, and it can return drafts to the sponsoring body for improvement only with the approval of the Government EI Committee.

2. Experience of the EU CEE Member States in Europeanization of policy co-ordination mechanism

Overall development background

The EU CEE Member States' Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Development Statistics [World Bank, 2019] show that Europeanisation has allowed states to rapidly increase GDP after EU accession and gradually get closer to the average level of the EU Member States. Meanwhile, a gap has strongly increased with the EU Association countries as Ukraine.

Experience of the EU CEE Member States on coordination of national EU policies is topical for the association countries implementing key national reforms to implement the AA. The experience of EU CEE countries shows that governance reforms, especially if they are ambitious and multi-dimensional, tend to be the most successful and lasting if they are implemented on the basis of the 'operating principles' governing this process, such as sustainable development; political and civil service management that can lead and promote effective change at all levels of the executive and be able to implement a common vision; the ability to implement innovative solutions, overcome traditional administrative barriers to the development, implement and evaluate policy delivery.



As the europeanization reinforced requirement for a stronger overall EU integration, most EU CEE Member States in the EU pre-accession opted for establishing separate EU integration offices either within or outside direct subordination to the Prime Minister. In this situation a **key to success was the coordination of respectful national policy both on central and line ministry level**. Not only specific departments/units dealing with the EU integration process but all other departments in the line ministries were involved in implementation work. Given the huge internal and external pressure for faster results, such institutional solution was seen as more efficient. This was also proved by practice – when EU accession was already in full speed, general support to policy coordination was at its infancy in the most countries. But, as the time passed, EU related coordination experience “spilled-over” also into general coordination practices in the Government.

While the creation of an effective policy coordination system should be an incentive, in reality, the EU Member States have chosen to create different models. **The approaches derive either from the administrative tradition at national level**, the desire to ensure certain national interests, or from the level of the EU as a policy-making area. The countries with comprehensive system were trying to monitor all the EU activities and engage in all policy areas. However, countries have a free choice to determine coverage and goals of policy coordination. For example, if in the EU pre-accession phase mostly dominated comprehensive centralized systems, the post-accession phase is characterized by shift towards selective/decentralized models. As a result, one country focuses on policy co-ordination in decision-making, while others prioritize co-ordination of quality decision-making.

Centralized policy co-ordination systems in the EU pre-accession and transition to the membership are mostly the result of the EU or external functional pressure. The impact of national structures, with the exception of Estonia, was relatively weak. As the operational pressure after joining the EU diminished, the impact of national structures in CEE countries also became more

significant, contributing to the decentralization of national models of policy coordination. It was also promoted by party coalition governments, which reduced the concentration of coordination around the head of government (Latvia). Consequently, the Western Balkan and Association countries have a primary EU operational pressure on the executive power, which mainly implies the establishment of a comprehensive and centralized system of policy coordination. On the other hand, the level of external pressure is lower than in the case of the EU enlargement in 2004. This leads to a higher impact of national structures and political party policies, which can affect the role and quality of national EU policies.

The countries having comprehensive systems seek to reach an agreement on almost all the EU-related issues. Interest groups, social partners and local administrations are usually involved in the formulation of mandates. They often engage proactively in the initial phase of a policy cycle. Compared to the ambitious system, the coverage of selective systems is rather modest. Emphasis is placed on the most important issues and the government is the main positioner. In addition, the focus is on the decision-making phase within the EU Council, where national representatives defend their national positions. However, policy coordination systems are less centralized than one might imagine as selective approach in the EU CEE Member States depends also on the limited resources and expertise available.

Notwithstanding the model, the EU CEE Member States should be considered as success not only due to strong internal efforts, but also due to a unique situation. In, particular, huge internal pressure in the favor of EU accession seen as a major achievement of these countries on the road to come-back in Europe after the communism era; high external pressure to achieve the accession from the EU and Western EU Member States and a narrow opportunity window (almost 10 years) offered the candidate countries to deal with the accession process. All that justified building of quick fix and separate coordination structures supporting EU integration in the absence of proper policy coordination mechanisms in the Government.

Policy co-ordination system requirements

The governments required **political commitment, political support and prioritization** of issues for implementation. It required to be **consistent and well-coordinated** (vertical and horizontal dimensions) with competent institution(s) responsible for overall support to policy co-ordination in the public administration. Coordination structures on the national level had to be built up considering **previous legacy, traditions and capacity of the administration**. Simple copying of models never had led to good results. The coordination system had to be balanced and responsibilities distributed. **'Super-power centre' systems normally did not work effectively** or at least were not sustainable in a long run since they did not facilitated development of relevant skills, knowledge and results on the level of line ministries. Clear agreement on competencies of all key stakeholders in relation to the main EU integration functions was required to avoid duplication and institutional rivalry. **A coordination mechanism that was spread too widely** between various central executive authorities (e.g. CoG (Prime Minister's Office and/or Secretariat General), MoFA and other key institutions) sometimes **produced confusion** and lack of clarity in distribution of responsibility. Equally, there was a need for a process and capacity to agree on delimitation of EU integration related competencies between the line ministries, as new specific competencies emerged from the legal approximation process. Development of the coordination mechanism had to be with non-conflicting functions (e.g. not offending the core responsibilities of the line ministries) and designed to ensure there is no 'bottle neck' or dilution of communication and command. Well-working and effective information flows, regular and structured information exchange were necessary on all main aspects of the coordination process.

In a decentralized policy co-ordination systems, **concrete responsibilities and functions of all relevant stakeholders were comprehensively analyzed** and then agreed and assigned as concretely and simply as possible. The more decentralized system existed, higher need for a proactive and strong horizontal cooperation was necessary. Line ministries maintained their policy responsibility in their respective areas of competence. However, there was a need to enable a

transparent process and capacity-building, through which differences of opinion were coordinated. **Policy planning, consensus building on key policy issues and implementation monitoring was co-ordinated closely.** At the same time coordination system required systematically equal emphasis on planning, implementation, coordination, analysis, communication to allow tracking link between activities and **resource planning, linking policy and programs with the budgetary process.** **Communication and exchange of best (or worst) practices** has proved to be extremely important. There was a vast amount of information moving around that all the stakeholders should know, so it was possible to develop a well-working and effective information flows (both formal and informal). **Coordination and working in formal and informal partnership with a common goal,** leaving aside the individual ambitions of institutions, was **extremely time and resource consuming but effective.**

Levels of policy co-ordination

Practice tells that it is difficult to bring together all the relevant stakeholders to work without **dedicated implementation policy co-ordinator and administrative mechanism of specialized inter-ministerial coordination bodies on political, operational (senior civil service) and specialists level** in the Government with regular frequency of co-ordination meetings. **It has especially been important for co-ordination in areas where central political guidance (direction) is required** or in cases of disaccord and conflicts between Ministries (e.g. cross-sectoral policies).

The EU CEE Member States had **considerable convergence of inter-ministerial structures for management of EU affairs.** Inter-ministerial co-ordination had number of different formats and levels, both political (strategic) and operational. Horizontal inter-ministerial structures included the Cabinet of Ministers, cabinet sub-committees, high level inter-ministerial committees of senior officials, mission in Brussels and committees dealing with wide range cross-sectoral issues. The line ministries, the Cabinet of Ministers and government committees served to channel work on the EU integration in national administration. The overall aim was to ensure that the EU integration issues are comprehensively dealt at appropriate level of hierarchy and involvement of national parliament and civil society.

All the countries established **high-level inter-ministerial committees to deal with negotiations and facilitate co-ordinated implementation of EU integration associated reforms.** Examples of the co-ordination on political level include the European Committee of the Council of Ministers (KERM) in Poland, the Coordination Council (Estonia), the Inter-ministerial Committee on European Integration (Hungary), the European Integration Council (Latvia), and the Government Commission for Coordination of European Integration (Lithuania). The nature of European governance necessitated the countries to create such inter-ministerial structures to manage cross-cutting issues and act as a counterbalance to the fragmentation of domestic public policy making arising from the EU integration.

Inter-ministerial coordination in EU policy implementation on the senior civil servants level was managed by mechanisms in the form of inter-ministerial committees, supported by working groups, and designated administrative units. Most interesting is the case of Slovenia which had even four levels of inter-ministerial co-ordination at different levels of Government during the EU accession negotiations process, i.e. a) coordination on the Prime Minister's level who was responsible for resolving inter-ministerial conflicts and interposing himself among ministries in their different viewpoints and positions on specific EU issues and convening the collegiate "European meeting" of the Government; b) intra-ministerial co-ordination; c) inter-ministerial co-ordination which involved the Inter-institutional Committee on the senior civil servants level and d) the meetings of the Working Groups represented the main inter-ministerial co-ordination of EU affairs [Metcalf, 1994].

The domestic processes were governed by a mixture of **formal rules and guidelines and informal conventions** that evolved over time. Some countries had a system with the highest level

of ambition backed by highly institutionalize processes and procedures, while the others combined formalization, decentralization and an ease of personal contacts within the system (e.g. Estonia).

Outstanding circulation of information and overall relationship was ensured between the executive and legislative power. **The role of the Parliament** was important but at the same time limited given a broad political consensus on the EU integration. The Parliaments had particular role for involvement on the political level. The Parliament had a say in adopting legal acts relevant for the EU integration and important role in this process was handled by the European Affairs Committees which were established in all the countries.

Assigned policy coordination body and its roles

Institutions tend to develop policies from their institution perspective. The role of assigned policy co-ordinator is to balance such situations and provide independent advice from the ministries on particular cross-sectoral policy issues. Development of assigned co-ordinating body was based on a **balance of functions** (e.g. not offending or doubling the core responsibilities of the line ministries). The assigned Co-ordinating Body **provided the best professional expertise and value added** to enjoy acceptance from other ministries/central offices in order not to undermine the whole coordination model. This gave **confidence to the line ministries** that they have a partner in the CoG assigned to support EU integration policy implementation as a competent focal point to EU integration related activities but not an extra level of control perceived as a bottleneck. **The assigned Co-ordinating Body** developed into a focal point but **avoided to become a bottle neck** where information from different layers of the Government was stuck. That was a risk undermining the credibility of the institution and damaging the effectiveness of the whole system. **Overlapping of functions** with the line ministries or **getting into technical details risked that assigned Coordination Body was not focusing on the core function of policy co-ordination**. The purpose of Coordination Body was leading to higher overall financial gains from the quality support to policy co-ordination than actual direct costs for running such institution.

It is often mistakenly assumed that there is one prevailing institutional and functional model that could be successfully transferred to any other country that aspires for closer relationships with the EU. Co-ordination models can prove their effectiveness only in specific conditions of a given country **and no single model can be indicated as the most efficient for implementation co-ordination**. The role of the assigned Coordinating Body has usually been the role of catalyst, the neutral co-ordinator at the CoG (in some cases as a separate line ministry) that is able to facilitate the EU integration implementation policy and adding major value to this process, e.g. preparing well informed ground for quality decision making in the Government. Therefore, there are neither “right” nor “wrong” models of policy co-ordination and actual functions of the assigned coordination office.

The assigned Coordination Body has usually been in charge of maintaining and co-ordinating the implementation of overall policy direction in the Government. Most co-ordination functions have been performed in co-operation between **the assigned Coordination Body** and other government bodies. This means that depending on various political, administrative and subjective reasons assigned Coordination Bodies corresponded to the country’s political situation, administrative structures, legal traditions and administrative culture. For this reason, some co-ordination functions as legal approximation, external technical assistance or training on the EU were centrally managed by the Coordination Body or assigned to particular key line ministries. Selected procedures and administrative culture might also be decisive to the speed with which administration is able to produce results.

An effective policy coordination happens if technical level capacity enjoys political sponsorship that empowers the technical level and supports it on ongoing basis. For coordination to work, the assigned Coordination Body had also informal power to pro-actively request ministerial action and to stop draft policies and legal acts from government agenda if they do not meet certain quality criteria or are contradictory with each other. The assigned Coordination Body

had a power to bring ministries and sometimes even ministers together to address certain important issues. Without strong political support or at least empowerment, it was hard to gain recognition of its authority among the line ministries.

Experience shows diversity of policy coordination mechanisms based on the existing organisations structure and culture; though many were drawn to a **dedicated Coordinating Body option**. The **countries took early measures to ensure that policy coordination was achieved during association process**, even though this involved sometimes difficult institutional decisions. The majority opted for stand-alone institutions or separate institutions under the Prime Minister in the SCM but **in all cases the countries had assigned co-ordination body in the Government**.

Of Ukraine's neighbours, during Association process, **Poland opted for creating a** specialized office (UKIE, *Urząd Komitetu Integracji Europejskiej*), subordinated directly to the Prime Minister and formally being a specialized unit in the State Chancellery, Estonia also established a sub-structure of the Government Secretariat reporting directly to the Prime Minister, while **Latvia and Lithuania** opted for stand-alone central executive bodies subordinated to the Prime Minister.

The **institutional models change over time and according to situation and the needs of a particular country**. In Latvia, due to absence of central policy coordination until late 2000, a separate EU integration Bureau existed outside the State Chancellery. As the accession accelerated, it was merged with policy coordination within the State Chancellery or got a more central MFA role. Institutional shifts have taken place in most other EU CEE Member States and candidate countries, too. However, direct transposition of a given institutional set-up successfully used elsewhere, may prove to be inefficient if applied without considering local conditions.

Finally, **comprehensive AA implementation program served as effective tool for Coordinating Body in making decisions on the annual State Budget** and giving medium – term financial perspective for implementation of range of activities. It was a helpful mechanism for defining external assistance needs as well as the needs for human resource development in the Government institutions working implementation aspects of particular priority actions. Good policy – making also required closely integrated view to legal approximation and policy implementation needs and development of more regular dialogue with social partners and discussion on likely implications from implementation of particular commitments undertaken by the AA.

Conclusion

Experience of the EU CEE Member States could facilitate Ukraine's national reform process and the AA implementation. Ukraine would have to do a systematic work on the EU integration agenda as its main objective to build a "European" image and to interact closely with the EU Member States, organize regular thematic government sessions on the EU integration process, strengthen the role of the legislator to develop pro-European political environment and its interaction with society.

The Government's EI committee should become fully functional as the political-level co-ordination body by consistently discussing EU integration related plans and reports on their implementation. The horizontal administrative-level policy co-ordination mechanism should be established and operationalized.

The guidelines for planning and monitoring EU assistance should be developed to better support the administration in the next stages of the EU integration process. The internal policy development procedures for line ministries should be prescribed to support functionalization of the new directorates for strategic planning and EI.

Despite the importance of policy coordination, its role must not be overestimated. A balance is needed between strengthening policy coordination mechanisms and the individual responsibility of the institutions. Coordination is not always the answer to government challenges, especially in situations where too much emphasis on coordination can be a problem.

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