



Modernization of the Judicial Administration System at the Local Level: Project Approach

UDC: 35.78:33.02:347.995:004.9(477)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15421/152446>

Kvitka Sergiy¹

Dr.Sc., Full Prof., <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3786-9589>, kvitka.s@nmu.one

Mazur Oleksandr²

Ph.D., Senior Lecturer, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7569-214X>, oleksandr.mazur@dduvs.edu.ua

Korsun Vitalii¹

Ph.D. Student, <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1831-4079>, korsun.v.v@nmu.one

¹*Dnipro University of Technology (Dnipro, Ukraine)*

²*Dnipro State University of Internal Affairs (Dnipro, Ukraine)*

Abstract

The project approach to reforming Ukraine's judicial system is one of the key directions in the state's development on its path to European integration. Special attention needs to be paid to modernizing the judicial administration system at the local level, as this is where direct contact between citizens and the judicial system occurs and where the principle of access to justice is implemented.

The purpose of the research is to determine project approaches in public administration at the local level in the sphere of Europeanization of the judicial administration system in Ukraine.

The theoretical and practical aspects of modernizing the judicial administration system at the local level using the project approach have been analyzed. The current state of judicial administration in Ukraine has been examined, and the main problems and development prospects have been identified. Based on the study of European experience, directions for improving the judicial administration system have been proposed, taking into account local level specifics.

It is concluded that successful implementation of modernization projects requires a systematic approach to change management, personnel development, and implementation of innovative technologies in accordance with EU standards. The integration of the Ukrainian judicial system with the European e-CODEX system becomes particularly important as it serves as a key factor in ensuring effective cross-border justice and improving the quality of judicial services. The implementation of CEPEJ recommendations regarding the digitalization of justice creates a reliable foundation for improving the efficiency and accessibility of the judicial system at the local level, which corresponds to the strategic goals of judicial reform in Ukraine and the state's European integration aspirations.

Keywords: judicial administration system, project approach, digitalization, Europeanization, territorial communities, Ukraine-EU Agreement, modernization of the judicial system, public administration

Модернізація системи судового адміністрування на місцевому рівні: проектний підхід

Квітка Сергій¹, Мазур Олександр², Корсун Віталій¹

¹*Національний технічний університет «Дніпровська політехніка» (Дніпро, Україна)*

²*Дніпровський державний університет внутрішніх справ (Дніпро, Україна)*

Анотація

Проектний підхід в реформування судової системи України є одним із ключових напрямків розвитку держави на шляху до європейської інтеграції. Особливої уваги потребує модернізація системи судового адміністрування на місцевому рівні, оскільки саме тут забезпечується безпосередній контакт громадян із судовою системою та реалізується принцип доступності правосуддя.

Метою дослідження є визначення проектних підходів в публічному управлінні на місцевому рівні у сфері європеїзації системи судового адміністрування в Україні.

Проаналізовано теоретичні та практичні аспекти модернізації системи судового адміністрування на місцевому рівні з використанням проектного підходу. Проаналізовано сучасний стан судового адміністрування в Україні, визначено основні проблеми та перспективи розвитку. На основі вивчення європейського досвіду запропоновано напрямки вдосконалення системи судового адміністрування з урахуванням специфіки місцевого рівня.

Зроблено висновки, що успішна реалізація проектів модернізації потребує системного підходу до управління змінами, розвитку персоналу та впровадження інноваційних технологій відповідно до стандартів ЄС. Особливого значення набуває інтеграція української судової системи з європейською системою e-CODEX, що виступає ключовим фактором забезпечення ефективного транскордонного правосуддя та підвищення якості судових послуг. Впровадження рекомендацій CEPEJ щодо цифровізації правосуддя створює надійне підґрунтя для підвищення ефективності та доступності судової системи на місцевому рівні, що відповідає стратегічним цілям судової реформи в Україні та євроінтеграційним прагненням держави.

Ключові слова: система судової адміністрації, проектний підхід, цифровізація, європеїзація, територіальні громади, Угода Україна-ЄС, модернізація судової системи

Стаття надійшла / Article arrived: 23.10.2024

Схвалено до друку / Accepted: 16.12.2024



Introduction.

The project approach to reforming Ukraine's judicial system is one of the key directions in the state's development on its path to European integration. Special attention needs to be paid to modernizing the judicial administration system at the local level, as this is where direct contact between citizens and the judicial system occurs and where the principle of access to justice is implemented.

The relevance of this issue is determined by the need to improve court efficiency, optimize judicial processes, and enhance the quality of judicial services provided to citizens. Implementing a project approach in judicial administration allows for systematically addressing existing problems and ensuring sustainable development of the judicial system at the local level.

The modernization of the judicial system is one of the most important and relevant tasks in the context of Ukraine's European integration. Ensuring European standards in judicial administration work at the local level becomes particularly important, as this is where citizens directly encounter justice. The effectiveness of local courts affects not only the speed and fairness of judicial proceedings but also citizens' trust in justice as a whole.

The relevance of this topic is determined by several factors. First, a significant portion of judicial proceedings in Ukraine are local cases that concern the broadest segments of the population. Second, the need for judicial system reform is driven by European standards requirements, to which Ukraine aspires to adapt, particularly in terms of ensuring access to justice and quality of judicial services. The third important factor is the implementation of the project approach as a tool for modernizing judicial administration, which allows for improving management processes' efficiency and ensuring the sustainability of changes.

Using the project approach to improve the judicial administration system requires a comprehensive approach, including technological modernization, resource management improvement, personnel training, and development of mechanisms for interaction with citizens and ensuring transparency of judicial procedures. Considering modern development trends in European countries, it can be confidently stated that the project approach to managing reforms is an effective way to achieve these goals.

The purpose of the research is to determine project approaches in public administration at the local level in the sphere of Europeanization of the judicial administration system in Ukraine.

Analysis of Previous Research and Publications. The project approach is gradually gaining widespread use in modernization processes

both at the state level and in local self-government at the community level and accordingly attracts scholars' attention to aspects of its use in various spheres, including the Europeanization of the judicial administration system.

V. Molokanova (2018) investigated issues related to implementing project management methodology in public administration, as well as the achievements of value-oriented project methodology, which are still insufficiently developed in the theory and practice of public administration in Ukraine. She highlighted problems of incomplete application of project management methodology in the system of state development management in Ukraine and proposed using value-oriented project management methodology for managing regional development, which improves planning quality and project and program implementation efficiency.

N. Sydorenko (2022) examines the evolution of the conceptual paradigm of public administration under the influence of administrative reforms' response to crisis phenomena emerging in the economy and society. In particular, she notes that recently, administrative transformations have occurred under the influence of the neoliberal strategy of managerializing public administration, that is, introducing project approaches and market mechanisms into it. New trends in modern public administration transformation are: management consolidation, strategic management activities, formation of flexible management model (agile governance), (stress) sustainable management (resilience governance), and post-Weberian bureaucracy.

S. Stavchenko (2018) in the project approach to public administration highlighted the role of crisis consultations, which represent a set of measures aimed at stabilizing the position of a particular subject, solving a complex of problems related to maximizing activity efficiency. He conducted a demarcation of crisis management and risk management and noted that while crisis management is mostly a process of responding to already existing serious threats to an organization or events that have already occurred, risk management is associated with the process of identifying certain risks primarily for the organization's future activities, as well as appropriate acceptance or elimination of these risks.

Given Ukraine's European perspectives and the operation of the Ukraine-EU Agreement, the issues of modernizing judicial administration in Ukraine are attracting increasing attention from domestic scholars.

A. Bielova (2022) devoted her article to analyzing the current state and determining promising directions for Europeanizing the



judicial administration system in Ukraine under conditions of developing digitalization of justice. She substantiated, in particular, that digitalization of justice is a challenge of the time and an objective need of today. It involves implementing modern digital technologies, digital innovations in all areas of courts' activities, bodies and institutions of the justice system to ensure accessibility, quality and efficiency of justice, its unity, improving judicial administration, increasing public trust in the court, strengthening the authority of the judicial branch of power.

N. Honcharuk (2022), together with the previous author, devoted their work to studying the current state of organizational-legal and personnel support for local courts' activities, as the main link in the justice system, under conditions of Europeanizing the judicial administration system in Ukraine. The authors summarized domestic experience in the formation and development of judicial administration, its transformation within the framework of previously conducted judicial reforms and determined priority directions for improving organizational-legal and personnel support of local courts under conditions of Europeanizing the judicial administration system in Ukraine.

L. Moskvych (2018) emphasizes the importance of implementing modern technologies in judicial administration, particularly electronic justice systems and document flow automation. She emphasizes the necessity of integrating judicial systems with electronic services, which will significantly increase the accessibility of judicial services for citizens.

According to research by S. Obrusna and K. Pasynchuk (2020, 2023), an important aspect of modernization is developing effective mechanisms for court management at the local level, which involves decentralization of management processes and greater court autonomy. The authors draw attention to the need for improving judges' and administrative personnel's qualifications, as well as the importance of creating tools for evaluating court work efficiency.

Among European researchers who made significant contributions to developing judicial administration theory, the works of M. Fabri (2019, 2021, 2024) (Italy) and P. Langbroek (2024) (Netherlands) can be noted. The scholars paid particular attention to issues of implementing innovative approaches in court management and using digital technologies. P. Langbroek (2019) developed a quality management model in judicial bodies in the Netherlands, where the project approach allowed for significantly improving the efficiency of judicial procedures.

Research Results.

The new digital reality is changing not only civil society and its institutions but also public administration and administration bodies. Digitalization and Europeanization of public authority form new models and mechanisms for modernizing administrative bodies of public authority. One of the effective technologies in this sphere is project management. As international practice shows, regional and local public authority bodies play a leading role in developing digital interaction mechanisms in society, promote civil society development, implement digital project management, including in such an important sphere of society's life as ensuring fair justice.

In conditions of digital society, opportunities for designing and programming the development of various society institutions that ensure different forms of democracy, which provide for protecting legitimate interests and needs of community and territory populations, significantly increase (Kvitka & Korsun, 2023).

Analysis of the current state of judicial administration at the local level in Ukraine showed the presence of several problems that require systematic solution based on the project approach.

1. Insufficient automation of judicial processes:
 - predominance of paper document flow;
 - absence of a unified information system for interaction between courts and other state bodies;
 - imperfection of digital document flow, which complicates access to judicial acts and their registration.
 2. Insufficient efficiency of court resource management:
 - irrational distribution of budget funds among courts;
 - absence of a system for monitoring the use of material and financial resources.
- However, according to research materials from the Consultative Council of European Judges, effective judicial administration should ensure optimal use of court resources, transparency of judicial procedures, and high quality of citizen service (Communication on Digitalisation of justice, 2023).
3. Personnel problems:
 - insufficient qualification of judges and administrative personnel in project management;
 - resistance to changes among some judicial system workers, related to insufficient motivation for improvement.
 4. Imperfect system of communication between court and citizens, lack of transparency in judicial procedures:
 - limited citizen access to information about their cases' status;



- absence of effective communication channels between courts and citizens.

5. Absence of unified quality standards for judicial administration.

European experience shows that implementing the project approach can become an effective tool for solving these problems.

European integration united EU member states in the matter of electronic justice and creating a unified internet portal that works on the principle of a "navigator" in matters of electronic interaction between courts, process parties with the court, and in proceedings in European courts (<https://e-justice.europa.eu/home.do>). The portal contains information about the competent court of each EU member state, the procedure for filing a lawsuit with the relevant court, applicable legislation, court costs, etc. (Council of Europe European Commission for the efficiency of justice, 2024).

Digital technologies have potential for improving access to justice and increasing justice systems' efficiency. To obtain full benefit from digitalization, the European Commission proposed a package consisting of a Communication on justice digitalization in the European Union, accompanied by mapping the current level of digitalization and Regulation on a computerized communication system in cross-border civil and criminal proceedings (e-CODEX system) (Communication on Digitalisation of justice in the European, 2023).

In the Netherlands, the "Quality and Innovation" project became the basis for reforming the judicial system, including standardization of judicial procedures, reduction of case consideration terms, and automation of document flow (Langbroek, 2019).

In Ireland, the "Civil Justice Efficiency" project focused on reducing case consideration terms and administrative costs through implementing electronic justice and a centralized database (Civil Justice Efficiencies, 2022).

In Germany, the judicial administration system modernization program is directly related to the federal administrative system and aimed at increasing the level of digitalization of judicial processes (Hratsiotova & Lukianchuk, 2024).

Project Approach to Judicial Administration Modernization.

The project approach to judicial administration modernization provides for systematic change management and innovation implementation. Implementation of the project approach to modernizing judicial administration at the local level in Ukraine includes the following.

1. Strategic planning - assessment of the judicial system's current state, determining priority

directions for modernization, developing an innovation implementation plan.

2. Project management - forming a project office and teams, developing roadmaps for implementing changes, evaluating efficiency through a system of key indicators.

3. Innovative digital technologies - implementing digital document flow and digital online platforms for citizens, creating a unified information system for interaction with other bodies, automating routine operations.

4. Personnel development – conducting project management training for court personnel, teaching digital competencies, implementing motivational programs to stimulate changes.

In our opinion, taking into account European Commission recommendations regarding justice digitalization in the European Union, a comprehensive model for implementing the project approach to modernizing judicial administration at the local level in Ukraine should be implemented based on integrating the e-CODEX system as a key element of cross-border cooperation in the justice sphere (Communication on Digitalization of justice in the European, 2023).

In the context of strategic planning, conducting a thorough analysis of the current state of judicial administration and determining priority development directions becomes of primary importance. On this basis, developing a detailed modernization strategy and forming a roadmap for implementing changes with clearly defined key efficiency indicators and a system for monitoring their achievement is carried out.

Organizational support for the modernization process involves creating a specialized project office and forming professional project teams with clear responsibility distribution. An important aspect is implementing modern project management methodology, which includes using agile methods, developing an effective reporting system, and comprehensive risk management.

The technological component of modernization focuses on implementing digital document flow taking into account e-CODEX system requirements, creating a unified information system compatible with European standards, and developing online services with cross-border interaction support. Special attention should be paid to implementing CEPEJ recommendations regarding justice digitalization and ensuring reliable information protection.

A key element of successful modernization is developing court institution personnel. This involves implementing comprehensive qualification improvement programs, including project management training and developing



digital competencies. Significant attention is paid to forming an innovation culture and creating an effective system for motivating personnel to implement changes.

Expected results of implementing the project approach in modernizing the judicial administration system in Ukraine.

Comprehensive evaluation of project approach implementation efficiency is determined according to CEPEJ methodology and taking into account justice digitalization requirements in the European Union, allows predicting significant positive changes in judicial system functioning at the local level. First of all, significant improvement in court work efficiency is expected, which will be expressed in reducing case consideration terms and administrative costs. Optimizing resource use and increasing labor productivity will create a reliable foundation for sustainable development of the judicial system.

Significant improvements are expected in the sphere of citizen service quality. It will become possible to increase the satisfaction level of judicial service users, which will be accompanied by reducing the number of complaints. An important achievement will be reducing service waiting time and increasing accessibility of information about court activities.

In the context of developing judicial system potential, key results will be personnel qualification improvement, implementing innovative work practices, and forming a culture of continuous improvement. Special attention will be paid to developing professional competencies of court workers, which will ensure high quality of judicial service provision.

Technological modernization will lead to substantial automation of document flow and creating a unified information space integrated with the e-CODEX system. Implementing electronic interaction systems according to EU requirements and ensuring technological security according to European standards will create a reliable foundation for developing cross-border electronic justice.

An important aspect of expected results is international integration of Ukraine's judicial system. Ensuring compatibility with European judicial systems and implementing e-CODEX standards

for cross-border interaction will allow active participation in international justice digitalization projects. Implementing CEPEJ recommendations regarding justice quality will promote further integration of the Ukrainian judicial system into the European legal space.

Conclusions.

The conducted review allows stating that modernizing the judicial administration system at the local level acts as a necessary condition for improving the efficiency of Ukraine's judicial system and ensuring European justice standards, especially in the context of implementing the e-CODEX system and CEPEJ recommendations. At the same time, applying the project approach opens possibilities for systematically solving existing problems and ensuring sustainable development of the judicial system at the local level, taking into account modern requirements for justice digitalization in the European Union.

It is important to note that European experience convincingly demonstrates the effectiveness of the project approach to modernizing judicial administration, which can be successfully adapted to Ukrainian realities, taking into account local specifics and the need to ensure cross-border interaction. The model of project approach implementation proposed in the study provides comprehensive solution of modernization tasks and takes into account all key aspects of judicial administration development, including integration with European digital justice systems.

The research results confirm that successful implementation of modernization projects requires a systematic approach to change management, personnel development, and implementation of innovative technologies according to EU standards. The integration of the Ukrainian judicial system with the European e-CODEX system becomes particularly important as it serves as a key factor in ensuring effective cross-border justice and improving judicial service quality. Implementing CEPEJ recommendations regarding justice digitalization creates a reliable foundation for improving efficiency and accessibility of the judicial system at the local level, which corresponds to the strategic goals of judicial reform in Ukraine and the state's European integration aspirations.

REFERENCES

- Bielova, A. (2022). Europeanization of the judicial administration system in Ukraine in the conditions of digitalization of justice: current state and development prospects. *Public Administration Aspects*, 10(5), 25-34. <https://doi.org/10.15421/152232>
- Civil Justice Efficiencies and Reform Measures. A Civil Justice System for the 21st Century*. (2022). Retrieved from <https://assets.gov.ie/225582/f246a2cb-9282-49e9-9982-4df75937c6cc.pdf>



- Communication on Digitalization of justice in the European Union and Proposal for e-CODEX Regulation*. (2023). Retrieved from https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/digitalisation-justice/communication-digitalisation-justice-european-union-and-proposal-e-codex-regulation_en
- Council of Europe European Commission for the efficiency of justice*. (CEPEJ). (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cepej>
- Fabri, M. (2019). Comparing the number of judges and court staff across European countries. *International Journal of the Legal Profession*, 26(1), 5-19.
- Fabri, M. (2021). Will COVID-19 accelerate implementation of ICT in courts? *International Journal for Court Administration*, 12(1), 1-12.
- Fabri, M. (2024). From Court Automation to e-Justice and beyond in Europe. *International Journal for Court Administration*, 15(1), 1-15.
- Honcharuk, N., & Bielova, A. (2022). Current state of organizational-legal and personnel support for local courts' activities under conditions of Europeanization of the judicial administration system in Ukraine. *Public Administration Aspects*, 10(4), 5-12. <https://doi.org/10.15421/152221>
- Hratsiotova, H. O., & Lukianchuk, K. P. (2024). A Review of the Administrative System of the Federal Republic of Germany. *Economics: Time Realities. Scientific Journal*, 2(72), 85-96.
- Kvitka, S., & Korsun, V. (2023). Mechanisms of network management of interaction between public authorities and civil society. *Public Administration Aspects*, 11(2), 81-87. <https://doi.org/10.15421/152322>
- Langbroek, P. (2019). Financing the Judiciary in the Netherlands: Between work overload in the courts and government control of the Judicial Budget. *International Journal for Court Administration*, 10(1), 1-23.
- Langbroek, P. (2024). Relying on the Courts: About Collegiate Collaboration in Courts as a Counterbalance to Professional Hierarchy and as a Necessary Precondition for Efficiently Delivering, Timely and Consistent Justice. *International Journal for Court Administration*, 15(2), 1-18.
- Marochkin, I. E. (Ed.). (2000). *Organization of judicial and law enforcement bodies: A textbook for law students in higher education institutions*. Kharkiv: Pravo.
- Molokanova, V. M. (2018). Implementation of value-oriented project management in public administration. *Public Administration Aspects*, 5(11), 5-18. <https://doi.org/10.15421/15201735>
- Moskvych, L. (2018). Trust in court: state and instruments of influence. *Law of Ukraine*, (3), 9-25.
- Obrusna, S. Y., & Pasynchuk, K. M. (2020). Electronic court as an administrative-legal category. *South Ukrainian Law Journal*, (3), 120-124.
- Obrusna, S. Y., Ivanova, I. V., Panimash, Y. V., & Pasynchuk, K. M. (2023). Administrative and legal status of military-civil public administration bodies as subjects of public administration. *Journal of Law and Political Sciences*, 30(3), 76-89.
- Stavchenko, S. V. (2018). Crisis consultations as a component of political management. *Scientific and Theoretical Almanac Grani*, 21(7), 24-30. <https://doi.org/10.15421/171890>
- Sydorenko, N. (2022). Modern trends in public administration development. *Public Administration Aspects*, 10(3), 59-63. <https://doi.org/10.15421/152220>