Participation of Civil Society Organizations in the Public Policy of National Memory in Ukraine

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Abstract
The article focuses on studying civil society organisations’ participation in the decision-making and implementation by public authorities. The aim of the article is to analyse the involvement of civil society in Ukraine (using civil society organisations as an example) in public policy regarding national memory in Ukraine. The article employs a combination of descriptive methods with analysis and synthesis methods, inductive and deductive methods, and the dialectical method contributes to the comprehensive study of the activities of civil society organisations. Comparative and structural-functional analysis methods were used to study the activities and functioning of civil society organisations. As a result of the research, the main vectors of public policy regarding national memory in Ukraine were identified; the regulatory framework of Ukraine regulating the activities of civil society organisations and their participation in political processes was analysed; an overview of the instruments of civil participation in the public policy regarding national memory was conducted; using the example of the “Reanimation Package of Reforms” Coalition, the activities of civil society organisations in the field of national memory through partnerships and networking were characterised. It was found that the state implements a policy to promote the development of civil society in Ukraine aimed at supporting civic initiatives. To implement this, Ukraine has formed a regulatory framework constantly updated by socio-political challenges and needs. The country implements the National Strategy for the Development of Civil Society, adopts international norms and standards, and fulfils international obligations.

Keywords: Public Policy of National Memory, Public Administration, Civil Society, Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisation, Public Authorities, National Memory, National Identity, Ukraine

INTRODUCTION
An integral component of developing a modern democratic state is ensuring unhindered citizen participation by public authorities in the decision-making and implementation processes. In a democratic state with a developed civil society, the formulation and implementation of public policy involve mandatory participation of civil society representatives. It applies to all spheres of society, including the policy on national memory as a system of goals and measures to create conditions for appropriate identification with the national state.

Civil society is a direct participant in the political process in a democratic state – the public not only presents the most acute societal problems and needs to public authorities but also participates in their resolution. Two interdependent conditions are essential in this context for achieving desired outcomes. On the one hand, this involves the activity of civil society organisations and citizens of the state, and on the other hand, the acceptance of public opinion by public authorities. According to the concept of democratisation by C. Tilly (2007), the degree of democracy is determined by how the state responds to the opinions, needs, and demands expressed by its citizens.

The formulation and implementation of public policy on national memory in Ukraine involve state authorities, local self-government bodies, civil society organisations, international institutions, businesses, and individual citizens. In Ukraine, there is an observed increase in civil society organisations and their activity, including participation in the political process. For instance, according to the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology,
in December 2021, the number of registered civil society organisations in Ukraine was 96,258, 25% more than in 2013. After the start of the full-scale Russo-Ukrainian war, the growth in the number of new civil society organisations decreased – in 2022, 2,760 organisations were registered, which is 36.7% less than in 2021; however, during this period, the number of charitable organisations increased by 7.7 times – in 2022, 6,367 organisations were registered. Positive changes are also observed in the level of trust of the population in civil institutions: according to the Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies named after Oleksandr Razumkov and the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (Ukraine), during the period 2016-2022, the level of trust in civil society organisations ranged from 42.7% to 64.5%, and by the end of 2023, it reached 63%.

Currently, in Ukraine, mechanisms of interaction between society and the state as actors in the political process are in place. Additionally, a relevant legal framework has been developed to facilitate favourable conditions for developing civic initiatives and implementing various instruments of civil participation in decision-making and implementation processes. The state pursues a targeted policy to support the development of civil society, respects its autonomy, and builds relationships based on transparency and partnership. The exceptional value of partnership between the state and society is emphasised in the National Strategy for the Development of Civil Society in Ukraine for 2021-2026, approved by the President of Ukraine in September 2021. It implies equal cooperation between state representatives and society as actors in public policy to address problems and meet the needs of citizens. Such cooperation is expected to ensure effectiveness in local, regional, national, and international decision-making.

A distinctive feature of formulating and implementing public policy on national memory in Ukraine today is overcoming Ukraine’s colonial past and combining two essential elements – national and European identity. In this regard, Yu. Yurchuk (2017) operates with concepts such as “restoration of history and identity” and “overcoming the difficult past”, which define the policy of reviving national memory and overcoming the imperial colonial and Soviet communist past. According to Yurchuk, as a postcolonial state, Ukraine must create its history, distanced from Soviet history, and as a European state, embody European values and set strategic goals for European integration. Indeed, Ukraine has a millennia-old history and close ties with European countries, so the European integration processes, which have accelerated in recent years, are also taking place in the sphere of national memory.

The choice of such a research goal is justified by the predominance of works in scientific discourse that analyse the participation of state institutions in public policy on national memory. Participants of the 2nd International Conference on Cultural Informatics, Communication & Media Studies, held in 2019 in Greece, stated that in memory studies, the state and its institutions are often recognised as the main actors in shaping collective memory, while civil society organisations are ignored.

The purpose of this article is to analyse the participation of Ukrainian civil society (in the example of non-governmental organisations) in the public policy of national memory.

Research Objectives

- to identify the main vectors of the public policy of national memory in Ukraine, which are vital at present and will remain so shortly;
- to analyse the legal acts of Ukraine that regulate the activities of public organisations and their participation in political processes, as well as ensure the formation and implementation of public policy of national memory;
- to review the instruments of public participation in the public policy of national memory that ensure the interaction of civil society organisations and public authorities;
- using the example of the “Reanimation Package of Reforms” Coalition, which brings together leading civil society organisations and experts of Ukraine, to characterise the activities of civil society organisations in the field of national memory through the prism of partnership and networking;
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- to describe the integration of the Ukrainian public sector into the policy of European collective memory using the example of the leading international non-governmental organisation “Platform for European Memory and Conscience”.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars generally discuss the public's involvement in Ukraine's national memory policy from the late 1980s onwards. It was a time when civil society was forming, coinciding with specific democratic processes. The conceptual foundations for public policy on national memory were laid by the active participation of citizens in the socio-political life of the country and the activities of newly formed civic associations for the revival and preservation of the historical memory of the Ukrainian people (Vlasenko, S., 2023). According to A. Kyrydon (2015), transformative changes in the consciousness of Ukrainians made this possible. It was sparked by growing interest in the past and discovering unknown facts of Ukrainian history.

Civil society's activity in public policy on national memory in Ukraine should be linked to the peculiarities of the development of civil society. S. Worschech (2017) provided an exciting characterisation of Ukrainian civil society. The development of the subject was described as dynamic. Strengths and weaknesses were identified. The ability to conduct campaigns and mobilise was considered a strong point. However, the lack of solid structures to support transformational processes in politics, economics, and culture was considered a weakness. P. Hornostai (2022) shares this viewpoint, acknowledging the positive aspect of Ukrainian civil society's high capacity for self-organisation but identifying a negative aspect in its lack of institutionalisation. Positive indicators in the development of civil society in Ukraine include the growing number and variety of civil organisations, their expanding spheres of activity, and their ability to develop organizationally. However, attention is still required in institutionalising civil-political associations while forming public policy (Honiukova, L.V., 2015).

An assessment of civil society, as provided by scholars in various fields, requires clarification. In recent years, there have been positive changes in the development of civil society in Ukraine, including increased citizen initiative and participation by civil society organisations in public policy, including the sphere of national memory. The Institute of Analysis and Advocacy in Ukraine has observed various activities within contemporary Ukrainian civil society. These activities include mediating between the government and citizens, developing, supporting the adoption of, and assisting in implementing laws. To achieve this, additional measures are required to institutionalise this policy. Scholars S.V. Soroka and S.V. Lizakovska (2022) define institutionalisation in public administration as the process of establishing social norms, standards, and rules, as well as organising and formalising stable relationships between components of public administration. It is reached by creating a system, such as laws, social norms, or established procedures, to meet society's essential needs. Institutionalisation can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration. Therefore, institutionalising the interaction between government bodies and civil society is crucial, particularly at the local self-government level. Specifically, developing issues related to ensuring transparency, openness, and accountability of public administration, which cannot be achieved without cooperation with civil society, is necessary.

O. Kornievsky and O. Rozunmyi (2019) discuss the impact of civil society organisations on shaping the national memory of the Ukrainian people. After studying three Ukrainian civil organisations in the field of national memory (the Center for the Study of the Liberation Movement, the Ukrainian Institute for the Study of the Holocaust “TKUMA”, and the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center), they proposed dividing the methods of activity of civil institutions into two types. The first directly influences society's historical memory (conducting information campaigns and exhibitions, creating museums and archives, publishing activities, and others). The second is interaction with state institutions responsible for implementing memory policy (establishing cooperation, state support for their projects, and participation of representatives of civil organisations in relevant government bodies or structures).
METHODS

The article's interdisciplinary topic determined the use of an appropriate research methodology that allows the use of various sciences' approaches, methods and tools through their integration and interaction. Thus, various research methods and techniques were used during the study, which are inherent in scientific knowledge in public administration and other fields, mainly in the social sciences and humanities. For example, the synthesis method determined the general features and properties of the phenomena and processes in the society under study.

Applying the dialectical method contributed to a holistic study of the activities of civil society organisations involved in the public policy of national memory. The specification method helped identify specific features and interrelationships of events and consequences in the activities of civil society organisations. The principle of general connection facilitated understanding the essential features of the problem under study. The axiological approach made it possible to consider the activities of civic organisations from the point of view of recognising generally accepted social, national and European values.

Comparative and structural-functional analysis methods were used to study public organisations' activities and their functioning. The use of the systematisation, networking, and cooperation method of individual civil society organisations, as well as structural and organisational features of their activities in the field of national memory, allowed for tracking partnerships, networking, and logical and dialectical methods.

General scientific methods of cognition, such as inductive and deductive, were also used during the study. The induction method made it possible to assess the effectiveness of the activities of non-governmental organisations in the field of national memory, and the method of deduction contributed to the study of actions and events carried out by them.

RESULTS

Considerable attention is devoted to the public policy of national memory in Ukraine today by both the state and society. There are various reasons for this, but we can identify two most defining ones. The first reason (internal) is the robust demand for a national memory policy within Ukrainian society. It is explained by the existence of a mature and developed Ukrainian civic nation with its collective memory. Ukrainians perceive themselves as representatives of the Ukrainian nation as an integral part of the European multinational community. The national memory of the Ukrainian people is a component of not only Ukrainian national identity but also European identity. In May 2023, the Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies, named after Oleksandr Razumkov, conducted an exciting survey of Ukrainian citizens to the question, "To which cultural tradition do you primarily relate yourself?" 80.8% of respondents indicated Ukrainian cultural tradition (for comparison, in 2015, this figure was 65.5%), and to the question, "Do you feel like a European?" 50.6% of respondents responded positively (in 2015 – 29%). The second reason (external) is Russian aggression against Ukraine, which has been taking place since 2014 in the form of a hybrid war and since 2022 in the form of full-scale warfare. Its component is informational warfare in the form of modern fakes and historical myths spread by Russian propaganda in Ukraine and worldwide aimed at destroying Ukrainian national identity. Therefore, the state and society try to counter the threat to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and protect and preserve the Ukrainian nation. One of the driving levers in this confrontation is public policy on national memory, which is a significant factor in Ukraine's national security.

The article uses “civil society organisations” and/or “civil organisations”. According to Ukrainian legislation, in particular the Law of Ukraine “On Public Associations” (dated March 22, 2012, No. 4572-VI), civil organisations are defined as public associations whose founders and members (participants) are individuals. They are voluntary, non-profit, independent of public authorities, and created to satisfy social interests. Civil organisations act as defenders of citizens' interests and intermediaries between citizens and the state.

Public policy on national memory in Ukraine is defined by the peculiarities of the historical development of the Ukrainian state and the contemporary challenges associated with the Russian-Ukrainian war. First and foremost, this includes the long-term imperial colonisation and Soviet occupation of Ukrainian territories, during which a deliberate policy of eradicating Ukrainian national identity was pursued (late 18th century – late 20th century).
Therefore, after the restoration of Ukraine's independence in 1991, the state and society faced the task of reviving national culture, traditions, and customs, restoring national symbols and the Ukrainian language, revealing the truth about the millennia-old history of Ukrainian statehood and the unyielding struggle of the Ukrainian people for the right to exist as the Ukrainian nation. At the same time, one of the characteristic features of national memory policy in Ukraine is the constant presence of the post-Soviet factor, which is also characteristic of the states of Central and Eastern Europe that were part of the Warsaw Pact (Vlasenko, S.I., 2023).

Today, the public policy of national memory in Ukraine has three main vectors:

1) the formation of the fundamental foundations of Ukrainian national identity, which plays a vital role in nation-building and state-building (these processes began in the late 1980s);

2) overcoming the colonial past, which took place constantly with certain waves of upsurge - de-Sovietisation of the late 1980s and early 1990s; the so-called “Lenin's fall” and decommunisation of 2013-2016; de-Russification, decommunisation and decolonisation of 2022-2024

3) shaping the collective memory of the Ukrainian people about the Russian-Ukrainian war of 2014-2024 and countering the historical myths of Russian propaganda.

The participation of civil society in political processes in the field of national memory is regulated by relevant legal acts. In particular, the Constitution of Ukraine enshrines the right of citizens to participate in the management of state affairs (Article 38), to unite to exercise and protect their rights and freedoms and to satisfy their interests (Article 36).

The formation and activities of civil society organisations are led by the Laws of Ukraine “On Public Associations” and “On State Registration of Legal Entities, Individual Entrepreneurs and Public Formations”. The interaction between civil society organisations and public authorities is regulated by several legal acts, including the Laws of Ukraine “On Citizens' Appeals”, “On Information”, “On Access to Public Information”, “On Local Self-Government in Ukraine”, resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On Approval of the Procedure for Facilitating Public Expertise of the Activities of Executive Authorities”, “On Ensuring Public Participation in the Formation and Implementation of State Policy” and its approved “Procedure for Conducting Consultations with the Public on Issues of Forming and Implementing State Policy”, “On Approval of the Procedure for Conducting Consultations of Executive Authorities with Representative Bodies of Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine”. They provide opportunities for public participation in the management of state and public affairs, which allows not only the defence of their rights and interests but also the improvement of the work of public authorities.

Today, systemic reforms in various spheres of state policy are ongoing in Ukraine, which are an integral part of transformation processes on the path to European Union membership. Among them, a sustainable civil society is critical from the perspective of democratic development. The affirmation of civil society as a guarantee of democratic state development is identified as one of the main principles of Ukraine's internal policy. Public policy in this area is carried out following the “National Strategy for the Development of Civil Society for 2021-2026”. It envisages the creation of favourable conditions for the development of civic initiative and self-organisation in society, the formation and activities of civil society organisations, and the establishment of partnership interaction between them and state authorities and local self-government bodies. The Strategy aims to build such relations between society and the state where decisions concerning civil society are made jointly. It involves the participation of civil society organisations and citizens at all stages of public policy: conducting analysis of the policy implementation status, identifying trends, identifying problems and developing solutions, drafting decision projects and their implementation, monitoring policy implementation, and evaluating policy effectiveness. Thus, compliance with the conditions of partnership relations between the state and society at the national, regional, and local levels is ensured, which is one of the significant factors of democracy.

The so-called “decommunisation laws” of April 9, 2015, resonated particularly in society. Their adoption was linked to the events of the Revolution of Dignity and is often seen as a response by public authorities to a solid societal demand. A similar situation occurred during the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Condemnation and Prohibition of Propaganda of Russian Imperial Policy in Ukraine and Decolonization of Toponymy” in 2023, which was associated with Ukrainians' desire to rid themselves of their Russian colonial past following the start of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war on February 24, 2022. Notably, the “decommunisation laws” have faced significant criticism from Ukrainian and international experts. For example, B. Törnquist-Plewa and Y. Yurchuk (2019) saw elements of Ukrainian “postcolonial hybridity” in memory politics, explaining their symbolic nature as being “rhetorical, almost poetic”. Researcher T. Zhurzhenko (2022), comparing Ukraine's legislation in the field of national memory up to 2015 with the “decommunisation laws”, called them “much more ambitious and comprehensive”. In our opinion, despite the symbolic nature of these laws, they played an essential role in institutionalising the policy of national memory in Ukraine. They demonstrated cooperation between civil society organisations and state authorities in the legislative process.

Civil society organisations directly or indirectly influence the formation and implementation of public policy on national memory in Ukraine. They have the right to independently or jointly with other stakeholders address state authorities and local self-government bodies with proposals, observations, statements, or petitions; participate in the process of adoption of legislative acts by these authorities; take part in the work of advisory, consultative, and other auxiliary bodies established by state authorities and local self-government bodies; conduct signature collection campaigns on their websites in support of electronic petitions to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the President of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, or local self-government bodies on essential issues of public life; monitor the activities of public authorities regarding the implementation of national memory policy and their overall performance or specific officials in particular, and so on. Their activities can be directed both towards society and towards public authorities. The effectiveness of civil participation in this policy depends on establishing partnership relations between the actors of the political process representing civil society and the state.

As we can see, Ukraine's legislation regulates the relations between civil society organisations and public authorities. It includes tools for the direct participation of civil society organisations in the development of legislative acts and the adoption of managerial decisions regarding the formation and implementation of public policy on national memory. Among them are advisory, consultative, and auxiliary bodies. They are collegial bodies established by central and local executive authorities and local self-government bodies for the coordinated resolution of issues related to the implementation of public policy in a specific area or sector. They operate permanently or temporarily and facilitate public participation in shaping and implementing public policy. An analysis of the activities of executive authorities responsible for the formation and implementation of public policy on national memory has revealed the participation of civil society organisations in collegial bodies, public councils, expert councils, and expert commissions. It has also been found that the level of civil participation in these bodies varies.

In particular, collegial bodies are permanently operating advisory bodies that may include civil society representatives. They are established within ministries and central and local executive authorities. Collegial bodies discuss and make decisions regarding the perspectives and most essential directions of the authorities' activities; consider proposals for improving legislation, shaping and implementing state policy in a particular field, improving the performance of relevant authorities; analyse the results of the work of these bodies, and so on. For example, the Collegium of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, which is a central executive
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authority, includes representatives of civil society organisations such as the “Centre for Civil Liberties”, the “Ukrainian Centre of the International PEN Club”, and “Democratic Initiatives named after Ilko Kucheriv”.

Expert councils are established within executive authorities to provide recommendations and proposals on matters within their competence. Representatives of civil institutions are invited to join them. For example, in the field of national memory, there is an Expert Council of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine on issues of decommunisation and derussification. Civil society organisations such as the “Centre for Political Values Research” and the “Centre for Urban History of Central-Eastern Europe” represent public interests. The Expert Council, independently and in collaboration with the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, has prepared a series of recommendations addressing issues related to overcoming the consequences of russification and totalitarianism.

Thus, the interaction of state authorities, local governments and civil society organisations in the public policy of national memory is carried out at the state, regional and local levels. It is aimed at:

- ensuring the legal conditions for the functioning and development of civil society organisations and their participation in the formation and implementation of the national memory policy;
- establishing a dialogue between the public and public authorities;
- informing citizens about the results of the policy and the participation of civil society organisations and public authorities in it.

Ensuring adherence to principles of openness and transparency is one of the essential components of cooperation between civil society and the state. Civil society organisations and public authorities report on their activities on their official websites, informing the public about their participation in political processes and the results of such participation. For example, in 2023, central and local executive authorities collectively held 1296 events involving public participation: 101 meetings of advisory bodies, 106 forums, conferences, and round tables, 200 meetings and consultations, 750 electronic consultations, and 129 other events. Public discussions covered 1185 issues of significant societal importance, including 691 draft legislative acts.

Public policy effectiveness can be enhanced through partnerships and networking among civil society organisations. Pooling efforts allow for the utilisation of more tools and mechanisms, the involvement of more experts in various fields, engaging more stakeholders and applying various forms of participation in political processes. Partnerships may be ongoing or situational for the implementation of specific projects or initiatives; they may address many areas of public life or a specific field; be long-term or short-term; involve a large number or a few civil society organisations; operate at local and regional levels, at the national or international levels, and so on.

One successful example of a long-standing effective partnership among civil society organisations in Ukraine is the Civil Society Coalition’s "Reanimation Package of Reforms" (RPR). It was initiated by civic activists, journalists, scholars, and experts in 2014 after the Revolution of Dignity to implement reforms in Ukraine. According to the Charter adopted on March 15, 2016, its status was defined as a public platform that brings together leading non-governmental organisations and experts and acts as a coordination centre for developing and implementing key reforms in Ukraine. On May 8, 2019, it was registered as the Civil Society Coalition “Reanimation Package of Reforms”, founded by 25 civil society organisations. One of its co-founders, then co-chairman of the Council (a permanently operating governing body), Taras Shevchenko, noted: “Equally important for the sustainability of the Coalition's development is the ability to agree on fair and effective game rules. The game's rules are the governance and decision-making model in the Coalition. We must create our own model rather than follow someone else's experience” (Povzyk R., 2017).

The Reanimation Package of Reforms includes 28 civil society organisations, a network of regional partners, and experts. Leading organisations operating in the field of national memory are the Research Center for Liberation Movement (coordinates this area since 2014), the Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law (since 2018), and the Ukrainian Independent Centre for Political Studies (since 2019).
In its activities related to public policy on national memory, the Reanimation Package of Reforms applies various tools of public participation: development and publication of analytical products, participation in the development of draft laws, publication of statements, communication with stakeholders, involvement of experts, and publication of their research (infographics, articles), media work, and more.

The Coalition has developed three Roadmaps for Reforms with step-by-step plans for implementing changes in various areas and draft laws (for 2015, 2016-2017, 2019-2023). In particular, in 2014-2015, civil society organisations and Coalition experts contributed to preparing draft laws known as the “decommunisation package” (adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on April 9, 2015).

In the Roadmaps for Reforms for 2016-2017 and 2019-2023, the national memory policy was defined as one of the critical tasks of democratic transformation in Ukraine. In particular, specific goals and actions of public authorities were proposed for their implementation:

- free, sustainable and open access to archives, including documents of Soviet repressive bodies. It was supposed to create and ensure the work of the Sectoral State Archive of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (implemented); transfer documents of repressive bodies to this Archive (not implemented); update general archival legislation by the Law on Access to Archives adopted in April 2015. The Law of Ukraine “On Access to Archives of Repressive Bodies of the Communist Totalitarian Regime of 1917-1991” was adopted in April 2015 (implemented);
- preserving the memory of totalitarianism and the struggle against it. It was planned to create and ensure the operation of the Museum of the Revolution of Dignity (completed); build the National Memorial Complex of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes (not completed); create a Museum of Totalitarianism / Museum of Occupation (not completed); develop a concept for the National Pantheon and places of honorary military burials (partially completed);
- restoring the rights of victims of repression by the communist totalitarian regime. It was planned to update the legislation on rehabilitation of victims of political repression (implemented), to form and ensure the activities of rehabilitation commissions (implemented);
- defining a comprehensive policy on public holidays and commemoration practices, and legislative regulation of this issue (not implemented).

Particular significance was attached to the task for 2019-2023 concerning national memory policy in general – “to incorporate national memory policy as an integral and mandatory element of state policy, similar to economic, educational, security policies”. In our opinion, the first steps towards successfully implementing this task have been taken - the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory and civil society representatives prepared a draft law of Ukraine, “On the Principles of State Policy of the National Memory of the Ukrainian People”.

During 2022-2024, in connection with the full-scale war by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, issues of de-Russification were actualised in national memory policy. Civil society organisations - participants of the Reanimation Package of Reforms Coalition and its regional representatives - joined the processes of de-Russification at the national, regional, and local levels.

In early 2023, the Reanimation Package of Reforms Coalition and its partners presented the document “Vision of Ukraine: Reforming and Restoring the Social-Humanitarian Sphere in Perspective to 2030”. It provides specific proposals for addressing critical issues in the field of national memory during 2024-2030 and identifies the main actors of this policy, including civil society organisations. Among the key issues are overcoming the fragmentation of societal perceptions of Ukrainian history, preserving an inclusive approach to shaping Ukrainian historical narratives (integrating the history of the Ukrainian diaspora, Crimean Tatars, Jews, and Roma), building and restoring memory infrastructure, taking into account societal demands; social protection and rehabilitation policy for victims of political repression and social support for independence fighters; strengthening integration with the European memory space, and more.

Also, representatives of civil society organisations that are part of the Reanimation Package of Reforms Coalition are members of advisory and unique bodies, either permanently or temporarily, attached to public
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authorities and contribute to the formation and implementation of national memory policy. For example, a representative of the Civil Society Organization “Research Center for the Liberation Movement” is a member of the National Rehabilitation Commission at the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (holds the position of commission secretary). During the existence of the National Rehabilitation Commission, from 2019 to 2023, 28 meetings were held, during which almost 2918 proposals from regional rehabilitation commissions were considered, and 2370 individuals were recognised as rehabilitated or victims of repression.

An example of effective partnership at the regional level aimed at participating in public national memory policy and vertical networking of civil society organisations is the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations “Experts Council” (Kropyvnytskyi city). It was established in early 2016 by civic activists and officially registered in April 2017. Since then, it has been a regional representative of the Reanimation Package of Reforms Coalition. According to the Charter approved on April 10, 2017, the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations “Experts Council” is a public platform that brings together non-governmental organisations to promote the reform of the governance system in the Kirovohrad region. In the field of national memory policy, the Coalition develops concepts of memorial and toponymic policies; participates in commission work; challenges the inaction of local authorities and private institutions regarding the implementation of laws in the field of national memory; conducts educational and informational work among the population; contributes to decommunisation processes in the region (including creating registries of monuments, memorial plaques, memorials that need dismantling, registries of toponyms requiring renaming), and more.

Undoubtedly, developing partnership relations, creating strong networks of civil society organisations, and involving as many non-governmental organisations as possible are effective ways to influence the government. Partnership and networking in the civil sector contribute to the application of various tools of civic participation in political processes regarding socially essential issues in the field of national memory, the activation of local interests, expanding access to information, exchanging work experience, and more. It also increases the effectiveness of non-governmental organisation activities, promotes greater citizen engagement, and enhances public trust. At the same time, in Ukraine, partnership and networking relations in civil society are only gaining popularity, requiring recognition and support from citizens, the state, and businesses, as well as extensive information dissemination and study of European experience.

According to the Law of Ukraine “On Public Associations”, non-governmental organisations can cooperate with foreign non-governmental and international governmental organisations. An example of fruitful and long-term cooperation between Ukrainian non-governmental organisations and the broader European civil society community is the international non-governmental organisation “Platform of European Memory and Conscience”, which has 72 members from 24 European and North American countries. From the Ukrainian civil sector, the Center for Research on the Liberation Movement (joined in June 2012) and the Foundation for the Preservation of Maidan History (joined in November 2016) are members of the Platform. The Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People, and two state institutions (6 institutions from Ukraine) are part of the Platform. The Platform organises international conferences, meetings, seminars, exhibitions, public memorials, and other educational and informational events. Its principal activities focus on studying, documenting, and informing about totalitarian regimes in Europe in the 20th century, primarily communist regimes in Central and Eastern European countries. For example, M. Mälksoo (2014) considers the existence of the Platform as an opportunity to shift the focus from historical to criminal justice issues in recognising crimes of the totalitarian communist regime in Europe or from general condemnation to a more specific desire to acknowledge crimes with tangible legal consequences.

Representatives of Ukrainian civil society organisations participate in the Platform's annual Council meetings, international scientific conferences, and other events organised by the Platform. For example, at the International Conference “100 Years of Communism: History and Memory”, held in November 2017 in Paris, a separate panel discussion on “Ukraine and Communism 1917-2017” was represented by a junior analyst from the Center for Research on the Liberation Movement, Anna Oliynyk. She delivered a report titled “From Communism to Deprogrammation: Fighting the Totalitarian Past in Ukraine”.

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Moreover, Ukrainian civil society organisations are participants in bilateral international projects. One such project was a seminar on “Hybrid Threats from the Perspective of the Czech Republic and Ukraine” (May 2019). It was organised by the Documentation Center of Totalitarian Regimes from the Czech Republic (as the initiator) and the Center for Research on the Liberation Movement from Ukraine. In October 2019, the Center for Research on the Liberation Movement, the Ukrainian office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the International Renaissance Foundation held the International Conference “How to Relate to the Past? Memory in the Post-Truth World” in Kyiv. The conference discussed issues related to national memory policy, media standards, and responsibility in historical discussions. Among the invited conference participants was the Platform of European Memory and Conscience president, Łukasz Kamiński.

The participation of Ukrainian civil society organisations in the Platform of European Memory and Conscience is essential for shaping and implementing public policy on national memory in Ukraine. Firstly, it allows gaining positive experience in implementing memory policies from European countries. The experience of Central and Eastern European states, which have a communist past, is precious. As researchers of international relations, L. Klymenko and M. Siddi (2022) note that collective memory shapes state security and foreign, intergovernmental, and global policies. Secondly, such participation integrates Ukraine's national memory into European collective memory. This issue has become especially relevant with Ukraine being granted candidate status for membership in the European Union. Cooperation between the Ukrainian civil sector and non-governmental organisations from EU member states is beneficial for implementing necessary adaptive measures for Ukraine within the framework of European integration. In this context, the words of the then chairman of the Scientific Council of the Center for Research on the Liberation Movement, Volodymyr Viatrovych, in connection with the Center’s accession to the Platform, are quite relevant: “In this way, Ukraine will remain within the orbit of European policy” (Muzychenko, Ya., 2012).

DISCUSSION

An indication of a legal democratic state is civil society, and the existence of civil society is characterised by active and initiative citizens who seek to unite to defend societal interests and achieve socially essential needs. Among them, the formation and affirmation of national identity are significant for the Ukrainian people. According to E. Smith (2004), national identity is the continuous reproduction and reinterpretation of characteristic values, symbols, memories, and myths that constitute the personal heritage of a nation. As we see, an integral component of national identity is national memory. J. Assmann (2008) asserts that memory allows people to live in groups and communities, and life in groups and communities enables the construction of memory. Therefore, public policy on national memory in Ukraine receives considerable attention from society and the state.

Establishing developed, multi-vector, and equal partnership relations between civil society and public administration bodies is considered particularly important in these processes. Policy effectiveness depends on establishing practical cooperation and constructive dialogue between actors of public policy representing society and the state. Ukrainian researcher T. Segeda (2014) identifies the most critical functions of public policy, realised through the interaction of civil society organisations and public authorities: articulation of societal interests; public control over the activities of power and the state of affairs in society, the state, economy, and socio-cultural sphere; influencing the formation of state policy; political education of citizens.

The participation of civil society in public policy on national memory is also influenced by socio-political transformations associated with European integration processes, which have been particularly active since Ukraine was granted candidate status for membership in the European Union (in June 2022) and the opening of negotiations on Ukraine’s accession to the EU (in December 2023). For example, the decentralisation reform in Ukraine, ongoing since 2014, contributes to the development of civil society at the local level, the establishment of relations between civil society organisations and local self-government bodies, and public participation in making important decisions for territorial communities, such as the installation or dismantling of monuments and memorials, naming or renaming public spaces, commemorating significant events, and honouring and commemorating prominent citizens.
In this context, international cooperation is considered valid, with Ukraine (state and civil society sectors) represented in international memory organisations and institutions. The issues related to overcoming the communist past remain relevant, requiring the establishment of relations in the field of memory policy, primarily with post-socialist countries in Central and Eastern Europe and expanding Ukraine's presence in transnational memory politics. The European Memory and Conscience Platform provides such opportunities, uniting national memory institutions and civil research organisations from European and North American countries. As L. Neumayer (2020) asserts, the participants of the Platform cultivate a specific interconnection that contributes to their mutual recognition: they construct figures of “victim”, “hero”, and “criminal” of communist crimes, combining humanitarian principles and political logic.

Significant changes in Ukrainian civil society are also associated with the Russo-Ukrainian War. In particular, civil society organisations have intensified their information policy activities to counter Russian aggression. In connection with this, a National Institute for Strategic Studies expert, Yu. Opalko (2016) proposed a classification of the activities of civil society organisations: advisory and scientific-analytical assistance to state authorities responsible for conducting state information policy; counter-propaganda and information-educational activities; collection, analysis, and dissemination of data on subjects of external aggression (including informational) against Ukraine; sociological and scientific-analytical studies of the state of mass consciousness and information space, the impact of information aggression on them, and the development of scientific-methodological recommendations for countering it; research and educational work; a collection of data, documentation, summarisation, analysis, and publication of information on systemic human rights violations and crimes against humanity in temporarily occupied territories. Although these studies were conducted in 2016, the proposed directions of activity for civil society organisations remain relevant today in the conditions of a full-scale Russian war against Ukraine.

In this study, we considered the positive interaction experience between civil society organisations and public authorities in Ukraine. It attests to the necessary tools for civic participation in the formation and implementation of public policy on national memory, the effectiveness of partnership and networking among civil organisations, and their participation in international memory institutions. The examples provided for consideration allow us to conclude the participation of civil society organisations in adopting regulatory acts and making managerial decisions. We can also speak of a high level of civic initiative and the existence of public control over the activities of public authorities and their implementation of national memory policy.

**CONCLUSION**

Analysis of the activities of civil organisations in Ukraine has shown gradual positive developments in civil society observed over the past decade. The activity of citizens facilitates this, as do their increasing interest in political processes and actions of public authorities and their willingness to participate in addressing socially significant issues. On the other hand, the state pursues a policy to promote the development of civil society in Ukraine, aimed at supporting civic initiative and establishing partnership relations between civil society organisations and public authorities at all levels of governance. To implement such a policy in Ukraine, a legal framework has been formed and constantly supplemented by socio-political challenges and needs. The state implements the National Strategy for the Development of Civil Society, adopts international norms and standards, fulfils international obligations, and so on. Legislative and other regulatory acts ensure the public's participation in political processes in all spheres of public life. It also applies to the policy of national memory, where the level of activity of the civil sector and its influence on the authorities is high. The process of forming the legal framework for the policy of national memory in Ukraine is ongoing. In particular, there is a need for the adoption of a particular legislative act that would regulate the issues of the formation and implementation of state policy on national memory, define its main principles and tasks, establish the powers and main directions of activity of all actors of this policy (the draft law of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory was put up for public discussion in January 2024).

The positive experience of the participation of civil organisations in Ukraine's public policy of national memory does not exclude the existence of problems in this area. In particular, some civil organisations require institutional and professional staffing according to the profile of their activities, activation of social work and
cooperation with other civil organisations, dialogue for with public authorities (especially at the local level), expanding the use of public participation tools provided for by legislation in the political process; exercising monitoring functions regarding the activities of public authorities; adherence to principles of transparency and openness in their activities; reaching the international level, expanding ties with non-governmental organisations of other countries and international institutions, studying and using European experience within European integration, and so forth. At the same time, the state should continue the initiated processes of sustainable civil society development and promote the establishment of partnership relations between public authorities and civil society organisations for the effective implementation of the policy of national memory.

Further scientific research will focus on studying the participation of civil society organisations in the implementation of specific directions of the policy of national memory in Ukraine, as well as on studying issues of organisational work, institutional and staffing support of civil organisations operating in the field of national memory.

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