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An extended abstract of the paper on the subject of:

“INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN POWER DECENTRALIZATION PROCESS”

**Problem statement.** The issues of changing the model of public administration in Ukraine, and the vital capacity of administrative territorial units are gaining importance. Administration of the state for over two decades has become a specific trial for administrative models, for it has been burdened with the Soviet-style experience. It should be noted that the real power has not been transferred to the lowest level of governance that is the level of territorial communities.

**Recent research and publications analysis.** Functioning of the public administration system at the local level has been explored actively from a variety of perspectives in the works by such leading domestic researchers of public administration as I. Degtiariova, I. Koliushko, O. Korotych, V. Kuibida, Yu. Kuts, V. Mamonova, V. Vakulenko and other scholars. Since the start of an intensified decentralization process in Ukraine, the number of research works devoted to changing the model of local authorities has grown considerably. Thus, a study of decentralization issues is discussed in the works by A. Chernobai, Yu. Nabatova, M. Popova, V. Velychko and others. However the researchers’ approaches to scientific substantiation of the decentralization process are quite different.

Therefore, the paper objective has become substantiation of the decentralization process impact on the qualitative changes of public administration institutions at the local level, justification of the use of the theoretical basis in the
course of local bodies’ institutionalization at the current stage of administrative transformations in Ukraine.

**The main paper body.** Ukraine has started an intensive process of transforming the local governance model based on introduction of the latest scientific results, while an impetus to changing a model and, consequently, the institutional basis of administration at the territorial level was given by adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Voluntary Association of Territorial Communities” and realization of the decentralization process. With adoption of the Law, a task of establishing approaches to an unambiguous understanding of the ‘capability’ notion has come up. The legislation causes a definition collision, because association of communities that is included in the definition can not guarantee the communities’ capability. Self-governed institutions, which exist today, due to objective reasons, are unable to realize in full the authority granted to them, and therefore – to render administrative services. It is a change of institutional provision, i.e. self-governed institutions, which can affect the quality of public services, and not a mere association of communities. According to the administration theory basics, in particular the division of authority principle, it is not the authority itself, but rather the mechanism of its realization that is divided – it can be asserted that the current territorial communities’ transformation is a decentralization process itself. A large part of scholars and practitioners focus their attention, in the first place, on the scope of local governments’ authority, and not on development of implementation mechanisms. Therefore, a decentralization process objective is the capacity of territorial communities to realize their scope of authority, granted to them by law.

**Conclusions.** To implement administrative reforms, specifically decentralization of power reform and ensuring the vital capacity of territorial communities, it is necessary to develop organizational provision of these processes and application of motivation mechanisms. The ways of implementation can be creation of analytical information groups, which could evaluate the prospects of a specific territory’s development in the context of administrative reform, and
emphasize its advantages for both territorial communities and the representatives of their interests – local council deputies and heads of village, township, and city councils. Besides, considering the present factual incapacity of local governments in rural areas to ensure realization of all the granted authority, it is necessary to redistribute its scope among other government bodies. The said measures are primary for implementation of reforms in any sphere, since even positive changes at first cause opposition of those, whom they concern. And a change in local power authorities concerns every citizen’s interests.

Since institutionalization is an orderly process with a certain structure of relations, hierarchy of power, discipline, and behavior, it is necessary to establish the rules of forming local government institutions that will have a new scope of authority and will be able to realize it. In the first place, it concerns executive bodies rather than representative ones. The main criterion of a community’s capability should be an actual capacity of self-governed institutions to ensure realization of authority granted to them by law.