

Залучення Сходу Європи: український виклик

Проект здійснювався з грудня 2010 по липень 2011 року за підтримки German Marshall Fund. Його основною метою було визначення шляхів допомоги інтеграції України до європейських інституцій.

Випуск № 2

Administrative Reform

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

On December 10 President Yanukovich has issued Decree that envisages reduction of the number of public servants (by, at least, 30%), reorganization of the Cabinet of Ministers (the number of Ministries will be cut from 20 to 16, Vice-Prime-Ministers will combine their posts with position of the Ministers, professional staff servicing the Cabinet of Ministers will be reduced by 50%) and other central bodies of executive power (they will be cut in numbers from 112 to 63 and will include services, agencies and inspections).

Reductions authorized by the President and streamlining of the bureaucratic apparatus are undoubtedly the steps in the right direction: throughout its modern history Ukraine has seen exponential growth of non-elected public officials – now it has 8.4 official per 1.000 people compared to 4.5 in the USA and 3.5 in Poland. However, it should be noted that the President tasked the Cabinet of Ministers with preparation of the documents that will define the principles of functioning of the central and local bodies of executive power not before, but after promulgation of the Decree. It means that the concept of the administrative reform is still in the making, while it is quite clear that sheer reductions of the number of officials and bodies, no matter how welcome they are, would not suffice. They would not work unless they are accompanied by establishment of the new principles of work of public servants and radical departure from the old ways that are to a large extent rooted in the Soviet traditions.

This should include draconian measures to combat corruption that was termed by President Yanukovich as “a threat to the national security of the State”. The moment of truth in this respect is to arrive on January 1, 2011 when a package of anti-corruption laws corresponding to international obligations undertaken by Ukraine is expected to come into force. Those laws are still being drafted by the relevant Ukrainian authorities and their final content will speak tons about real determination of the Government to put an end to corrupt practices.

Until this happens, political analysts are zeroing on the impact of the Cabinet reshuffle on the balance of forces in the highest echelons of Ukrainian power structures. The losers are quite obvious: first and foremost they are coalition partners of the Party of the Regions – People’s Party of Volodymyr Lytvyn, Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, and Communists that were stripped of their ministerial positions. They are rapidly losing their influence, as their votes are no more indispensable for ensuring approval of the President’s legislative agenda. Vice-Prime-Minister Serhiy Tyhipko (leader of the “Strong Ukraine” Party) is another outsider and another victim of Cabinet’s reshuffle – he kept his post, but lost any control over economic sector of the Government, having been relegated to the position of the head of the Ministry of Social Policy. He was tasked to spearhead pension reform which is going to be even less popular than Tax Code reform: in addition to the notoriety acquired by Tyhipko during Tax Code controversy this is likely to wipe his political force out of the Ukrainian political landscape.

At the same time, the President has decided not to perturb current correlation of main political groups within his own party headed by himself, PM M.Azarov, who contrary to rumors might retain his post until parliamentary election of 2012, Chief of Staff S.Liovochkyn, Vice-PM A.Kliuyev and R.Akhmetov. The latter was compensated for the loss of two ministries by appointment of its representative Vice-PM Kolesnikov the new “super” Minister of Infrastructure.

Administrative reform in its present shape follows the logic of restructuring and retooling the bodies and mechanisms of State that culminated in rescinding constitutional reform of 2004 and

further growth of presidential powers. Further strengthening of President's authority will also lead to considerable enhancement of the role of President's Administration that will become the locus of real executive power.