

SCTMG 2023**International Scientific Conference "Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of
Modern Globalism"****INDEPENDENT EXPERTISE OF PUBLIC POLICY AS A BASIS
FOR CONTROLLING ITS QUALITY**

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Abstract

The article characterises the theoretical and methodological foundations of the concept of expert quality control of the government policy EQGP (Expert Quality Control of the Government Policy) developed on the basis of Moscow International University. This article describes the stages of creation of the National Expert Organisation (NEO) - an independent collegial body formed from representatives of expert communities to carry out qualitative expertise of public policy (in particular, to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities of public authorities, as well as election projects and programmes of candidates for public office). There are 4 stages of NEO creation. At the first stage, a list of the main spheres and areas of public policy subject to expertise is approved; at the second stage, the organisational structure of the NEO and legal support for its activities are designed; at the third stage, a unified national register of public policy experts is formed; and at the fourth stage, the NEO management staff is formed. The article also defines some basic concepts of the EQGP.

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1. Introduction

The problem of the ideal state, formulated by Socrates and Plato more than two thousand years ago, continues to worry thinkers in the XXI century.

At the same time, modern intellectuals find themselves in completely different conditions than their ancient predecessors. We have entered the post-industrial stage of society's development, where we have met new (global) challenges, the main of which is the "overproduction" of information (Zotov & Terekhova, 2020).

How does this affect the problem of an ideal state? The fact is that citizens of the overwhelming number of states are voters, i.e. they participate in the formation of state authorities and are subjects of state governance (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2018).

2. Problem Statement

However, the significant amounts of information that citizens are unable to qualitatively process due to the lack of time do not allow them to build an objective and true picture of social (and political, in particular) reality. It becomes extremely difficult to make balanced and correct decisions in conditions of information overload. This leads to the fact that citizens take erroneous actions or refuse to make any political decisions at all (for example, showing absenteeism).

Thus, at present, our society is faced with problems that are largely common to all civilisation and necessitate the creation of a system of societal governance capable of meeting the challenges of the new century (Leiphart, 1997; Makhaev & Melnichenko, 2021).

3. Research Questions

Modern thinkers are in search of new models and strategies of public administration (Dahl, 1971; Golovanov, 2022; Habermas, 2021).

This article will describe the main types of expertise conducted in modern society, examine the specifics of public policy expertise, explore the stages of the creation of the National Expert Organisation (NEO) - an independent collegial body formed from representatives of expert communities to conduct a quality expertise of public policy (efficiency and effectiveness of the activities of public authorities, as well as election projects and programmes of candidates for public office).

4. Purpose of the Study

We believe that in order to solve the problem of improving the quality and efficiency of state and municipal governance it is necessary: firstly, to improve the mechanisms of formation of state and municipal authorities and, secondly, to introduce into the system of formation and functioning of state and municipal authorities as an obligatory element of it a mechanism of control over the activities of elected officials, allowing to promptly remove them from power in case of failure to fulfil the planned indicators (based on the results of the annual

5. Research Methods

Thus, the initial key thesis is as follows: the quality and efficiency of state governance depend, first of all, on the quality and efficiency of mechanisms of formation of state and municipal authorities and control over their activities.

The team of authors proposes an expert-centred approach to solving the problem.

The theoretical concept of Expert Quality Control of the Government Policy (EQGP) is being developed, which includes new theoretical principles and original models of formation of state and municipal authorities and control over their activities.

EQGP implies activation of the intellectual potential of society and active participation of experts ("expert factories") in the political process, both at the stage of formation of state and municipal authorities (for example, in the form of mandatory expertise of pre-election programmes) and at the stage of control over their work (in the form of mandatory expertise of reports on the activities of elected officials).

So, we state that one of the key conditions for overcoming the management crisis at the current stage of society development is the improvement of electoral procedures and procedures for control over the activities of top officials and state and municipal authorities through the active participation of sustainable expert communities in the political life of society.

The task becomes especially important in the conditions of virtualisation of political reality and massive use of virtual technologies to manipulate public consciousness. The constructed virtual political reality is often illusory in relation to the real space of political relations. The production of fakes and cyber-simulacra is becoming massive. The voter gets lost in the information space, is unable to make a qualitative choice, and becomes an object of manipulation. All this leads to the fact that traditional democratic elections are won by populists who have received huge funding from "interested" persons and have built a colourful advertising campaign. Thus, the process of formation of government bodies turns into a kind of show, a farce.

6. Findings

Let's start with the definition of "public policy expert".

The EQGP concept proceeds from the following definition: a public policy expert is an experienced specialist with a sufficiently high level of qualification engaged for the purpose of conducting independent expert-analytical research (expertise) and producing expert opinions on the issues of development (design) and implementation of public policy in certain areas of state activity.

Expert Councils should function as independent structures within their competence. They should be formed in accordance with the law adopted to ensure their work, be accountable to society and fulfil their main task: to organise and conduct expert examination of public policy, both at the level of its design and implementation.

The organisational structure of the expert council may be a system with a centre (e.g. in the form of a Bureau) and branches.

There are two options for the organisation and functioning of the expert council:

1) centralised.

2) decentralised.

In the first case, substantive norms and criteria (for the selection of experts, candidates for public office, etc.) are established that are uniform for all offices. For example, uniform criteria of qualification and experience are established. In the second case, each branch, based on the specifics of a particular area of public policy, independently establishes all substantive norms and criteria.

The scope of expert authority depends on which of the four models of expert control is chosen: model A, model B, model C, model D [3].

If model "A" ("strong" model) is chosen, experts are delegated the authority to form authorities and control their activities.

Model "B" ("weak") assumes limitations of experts' powers. They carry out expertise of candidates' and parties' pre-election programmes and reports on their activities, but the authority to form the authorities is retained by citizens ("mass voters"). In this case, everything is decided by the votes of the electorate.

In partially "strong" models "C" and "D" both mechanisms are in effect. We believe that in the republics with liberal democratic traditions with a high degree of probability the model "B" will be chosen, as it does not imply a radical restructuring of the electoral system and preserves the way of formation of government bodies, which is familiar to the citizens of these republics.

Creation of NEO is a nationwide affair in which public organisations and civic activists, business elite and intellectuals, civil servants and deputies should participate. The NEO creation process consists of 4 stages.

Stage 1. Approval of the list of main areas and directions of state policy subject to expertise.

Stage 2. Formation of the NEO's organisational structure and legal support of its activities.

Stage 3. Formation of a unified national register of public policy experts (National Register). The formation of the National Register is of great importance. It reflects the expert potential of the society (nation) and gives the most important impetus to the creation of the NEO.

The National Register is an information system in the form of an electronic database of experts in various spheres and areas of public policy.

Before the start of the competitive selection process, qualification commissions must determine the qualification requirements that will be imposed on candidates to the National Register. Qualification characteristics consist of basic and additional parameters:

- i. Basic parameters (education and qualifications, work experience, performance);
- ii. b) additional (feedback, recommendations, etc.).

Thus, there are two variants of functioning of the expert organisation's branches: centralised, when the substantive norms and criteria (for the selection of experts, candidates for public office, etc.) are established uniform for all branches, and decentralised, when each branch, based on the specifics of a particular sphere of public policy, independently establishes all substantive norms and criteria.

Similarly, there are two options for the work of the Qualifications Commissions: centralised and decentralised.

In the centralised option, all commissions set uniform requirements for qualifications, education, and experience (e.g. the requirement for work experience is at least 5 years).

The decentralised option assumes that each commission has the power to set qualification requirements independently.

Some commissions may allow candidates to the National Register to have secondary vocational education.

Other commissions will require that candidates' qualifications (as stated in their educational diplomas, advanced training certificates, postgraduate certificates, etc.) must necessarily correspond to the thematic profile of a particular section.

It seems that the decentralised option is the most optimal and expedient, since the spheres and directions of state policy are quite specific and differ from each other by many indicators (cf. science and education, security, personnel policy, foreign policy, justice, ecology, intelligence, judicial proceedings...), which cannot be ignored when organising the selection of experts.

If the decentralised variant of work of commissions is chosen, all qualification characteristics are approved at meetings of commissions by open voting by simple majority of votes and reflected in the minutes. In case of centralised variant qualification characteristics are formed and approved by the members of the Working Group (also by the results of open voting by simple majority of votes). The decision on the qualification selection is announced following the results of the joint meeting of the Working Group and the chairmen of the qualification commissions. The announcement shall specify: a) the place and date of the qualification selection; b) the date and time of the end of receipt of applications for participation in the qualification selection; c) qualification requirements for candidates to the National Register. The announcement of the qualification selection shall be placed on a specially created portal in the information and communication network of the Internet - digital platform of experts.

The working group should conduct a broad information campaign to alert citizens about the upcoming selection of experts to the National Register.

To participate in the selection process, applicants will have to register on the digital platform of experts and place an application form containing the data requested by the commissions: Full name, date of birth, information on basic professional education and qualifications, information on work experience (with supporting documents attached), information on the results of the activity

Stage 4. Formation of the NEO management apparatus. Once the National Register is formed, the next step is for the Working Group to start the process of self-organisation of the elected experts.

This may take place within the framework of a major expert congress with the participation of representatives of government authorities (President, Prime Minister, Speakers of Parliament, judges, etc.), as well as experts who have been selected for the National Register.

At this congress, the NEO Presidium, the leadership of the branches and sections (i.e. the management apparatus is formed) are elected by secret ballot of experts.

NEO will perform the following functions:

1. Maintenance and regular updating of the national register of public policy experts (NEO will have the exclusive right to own and manage this register). In other words, the task of accreditation and re-accreditation of public policy experts will be entrusted to the NEO.
2. Improvement of procedures for

accreditation and re-accreditation of experts, adjustment of qualification requirements for candidates to the National Register.

3. Carrying out expert-analytical research (expertise) of state policy. Organisational support for expert and analytical research includes:

- i. Notification of experts on the beginning of expert-analytical research;
- ii. Distribution of evaluation forms
- iii. c) data collection and processing (summarising expert assessments)
- iv. d) interpretation and publication of the results.

4. Development of expert analytical research methodology, development of proposals for its improvement.

5. Development of target indicators, development of proposals and implementation of measures to improve them.

Target indicators are of fundamental importance at the stage of formation of public authorities (within the framework of, for example, the electoral process); they should be reflected in the election programmes of candidates (parties), and the process of achieving these indicators will be assessed by experts in the relevant reports on the activities of elected officials.

6. Maintaining statistical reports.

7. Development and improvement of the system of electoral censuses for candidates for public office.

Such censuses may be:

- i. Higher education in public administration (educational qualification)
- ii. b) at least n years of managerial experience (skills requirement)
- iii. c) successful attestation based on the results of the state examination (knowledge qualification)
- iv. d) reputational value, etc.

In each country, the specific thresholds are determined by the expert communities during the expert deliberation process. For example, in one country the expert community may decide to set a minimum of 20 years of work experience, while in another country it may decide to set a minimum of 30 years of work experience. With regard to state examinations, in some countries the minimum examinations may include such subjects as "Constitution", "Theory and Practice of State and Municipal Administration", "History" and "Logic". In other countries, candidates are required to pass only one examination - Theory and Practice of Public Administration.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the article provided an original definition of the concept of "public policy expert", described the object and subject of public policy expertise, as well as the organisational and legal mechanisms of the genesis of the expert council (NEO).

The thesis that the expert council should be an independent, permanent collegial body organising and ensuring expert-analytical activity in the interests of citizens is substantiated.

This article also described the main stages of establishing a national expert organisation. The thesis was substantiated that the expert organisation should be an independent, permanent collegial body providing expert and analytical activities in the interests of citizens.

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