

*Когда наука достигает какой-либо вершины,
с нее открывается обширная перспектива
дальнейшего пути.*

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Механізм регулювання економіки

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STANDARDIZATION OF THE PROVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AS A TOOL FOR THEIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

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The current overregulation of economic and social processes in the country which hampers sustained economic development and causes corruption necessitates enhancement of the role and importance of economic deregulation, particularly in the administrative services sphere where the number of companies and individuals requesting services from public authorities and the share of administrative fees and payments in the state budget's non-tax revenues grows every year.

The goal of the article is to define the key problems in the sphere of standards of the administrative service provision, substantiate the ways of solving these problems and develop recommendations regarding the administrative services provision standardization process to improve their quality.

The subject of the article includes theoretical and methodological provisions and practical application of administrative services quality standards.

The article was written with the use of the analysis, synthesis and logical generalization methods.

The article offers analysis of the key performance indicators of administrative service centers and comparison of administrative services quality indicators of regional administrative service centers with the amount of financing spent on equipping these centers. The authors have analyzed the terms "standard" and "standardization" with regard to administrative services and proposed, on the basis of this analysis, their own definition of the term "administrative services provision standard". The best experience of European countries in implementing administrative services provision standards was reviewed. It was proposed to supplement the existing administrative services quality evaluation criteria and provision standards with new ones depending on the service applicant needs. In particular, the criteria provided by the administrative service system development concept must be supplemented by the criteria of simplicity, equality, justice, confidentiality of personal information, adaptation of the facility's conditions and technology of contacting and interacting with public servants to anthropometric, psychological and physiological features of different visitor categories, and adequate and timely response to criticism.

Keywords: standard, standardization, administrative services, standardization of administrative services provision, centers of administrative services.

СТАНДАРТИЗАЦІЯ НАДАННЯ АДМІНІСТРАТИВНИХ ПОСЛУГ ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ ПІДВИЩЕННЯ ЇХНЬОЇ ЯКОСТІ

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Через зарегульованість соціально-економічних процесів у країні, що заважає сталому розвитку економіки та сприяє появі корупційних проявів, існує об'єктивна необхідність у посиленні ролі та значення дерегулювання економіки, зокрема, у сфері адміністративних послуг, де кількість юридичних та фізичних осіб, які звертаються до органів влади за отриманням послуг і частка адміністративних зборів і платежів у неподаткових надходженнях держбюджету зростають із кожним роком.

Метою статті є визначення основних проблем, які існують у сфері стандартів надання адміністративних послуг, обґрунтування шляхів їх вирішення та розроблення рекомендацій щодо процесу стандартизації адміністративних послуг для підвищення їхньої якості.

Предметом статті є теоретико-методичні положення та практичне застосування стандартів якості надання адміністративних послуг.

У ході написання статті було використано методи аналізу, синтезу, логічного узагальнення.

У статті проаналізовано основні характеристики діяльності центрів надання адміністративних послуг та здійснено зіставлення показників якості в регіональних центрах надання адміністративних послуг та розміру коштів, витрачених на їхнє матеріально-технічне облаштування. Проаналізовано поняття "стандарт" та "стандартизація" щодо адміністративних послуг, на основі чого запропоновано власне визначення поняття "стандарт надання адміністративної послуги". Розглянуто кращий досвід європейських країн у встановленні стандартів надання адміністративних послуг. Запропоновано критерії оцінювання якості та стандартів надання адміністративних послуг доповнити новими, виходячи з потреб суб'єкта звернення. Зокрема, до критеріїв, передбачених Концепцією розвитку системи надання адміністративних послуг, необхідно додати критерії простоти, рівності, справедливості, конфіденційності особистих даних, пристосованості умов приміщення та технології звернення і взаємодії з посадовими особами до антропометричних та психолого-фізіологічних особливостей різних категорій відвідувачів, адекватного та своєчасного реагування на критику.

Ключові слова: стандарт, стандартизація, адміністративні послуги, стандартизація надання адміністративних послуг, центри надання адміністративних послуг.

СТАНДАРТИЗАЦИЯ ПРЕДОСТАВЛЕНИЯ АДМИНИСТРАТИВНЫХ УСЛУГ КАК ИНСТРУМЕНТ ПОВЫШЕНИЯ ИХ КАЧЕСТВА

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Из-за зарегулированности социально-экономических процессов в стране, что мешает устойчивому развитию экономики и способствует появлению коррупционных проявлений, существует объективная необходимость в усилении роли и значения дерегулирования экономики, в частности, в сфере административных услуг, где количество юридических и физических лиц, обращающихся в органы власти за получением услуг и удельный вес административных сборов и платежей в неналоговых поступлениях госбюджета растет с каждым годом.

Целью статьи является выявление основных проблем, которые существуют в сфере стандартов предоставления административных услуг, обоснование путей их решения и разработка рекомендаций относительно процесса стандартизации административных услуг для повышения их качества.

Предметом статьи являются теоретико-методические положения и практическое применение стандартов качества предоставления административных услуг.

В ходе написания статьи были использованы методы анализа, синтеза, логического обобщения.

В статье проанализированы основные характеристики деятельности центров предоставления административных услуг и осуществлено сопоставление показателей качества обслуживания в региональных центрах предоставления административных услуг и размера средств, затраченных на их материально-техническое обустройство. Проанализированы понятия "стандарт" и "стандартизация" по отношению к административным услугам, на основе чего предложено собственное определение понятия "стандарт оказания государственной услуги". Рассмотрен лучший опыт европейских стран по установлению стандартов предоставления административных услуг. Предложено критерии оценки качества и стандартов предоставления административных услуг дополнить новыми, исходя из потребностей субъекта обращения. В частности, к критериям, предусмотренным Концепцией развития системы предоставления административных услуг, необходимо добавить критерии простоты, равенства, справедливости, конфиденциальности личных данных, приспособленности условий помещения и технологии обращения и взаимодействия с должностными лицами к антропометрическим и психолого-физиологическим особенностям различных категорий посетителей, адекватному и своевременному реагированию на критику.

Ключевые слова: стандарт, стандартизация, административные услуги, стандартизация предоставления административных услуг, центры предоставления административных услуг.

One of the main internal institutional threats to Ukraine's sustained economic development today is corruption caused by not only the government's excessive intervention into activities of businesses but also breeding conditions for abuse of power in the public administration system created by overregulation of economic and social processes in the country. Therefore, the present situation requires enhancement of the role and meaning of deregulation, particularly in the administrative services sphere where the

number of companies and individuals requesting services from public authorities and the share of administrative fees and payments in the state budget's non-tax revenues grows every year.

Provision of quality and timely administrative services is based on the application of a number of requirements to the process of providing these services. These requirements are called standards in the most general sense, and the process of setting and applying them is called standardization. The impossibility to

compare the actual level of functioning of administrative bodies when they provide administrative services with the preset characteristics and to ensure their constant revision and improvement to meet user needs and requests leads to an unjustifiable increase of time, efforts and other resources spent by both the applicants and executants and the advent of fictitious (set out in a regulatory act but not actually provided by public authorities) and excessive (where private costs exceed private benefits of applicants and are inexpedient from the standpoint of social benefit) administrative services [1]. Therefore, development and implementation of modern standards is an important task of the national regulatory policy in the administrative services sphere.

Economic and legal aspects of the functioning of administrative services, including the list of administrative services, fees for administrative services, the mechanism of administrative services provision, have been the subject of many scientific works by such scientists, as: A. Banchuk, I. Bekeshkina, I. Koliushko, A. Nesterov, G. Pisarenko, V. Tambovtsev, V. Tymoshchuk and others. Theoretical and practical aspects of the organization of administrative services, in particular through integrated offices, have been examined by such scholars as: A. Mironov, A. Nozdrachov, E. Talapina, B. Braun, W. Weiss, C. Gramm, A. Mayer, L. Torres, H. Eriksen etc. However, despite the significant achievements in the field of administrative services, standardization of administrative services provision remains a subject of intense research interest in the modern scientific discourse.

The goal of this study is to define the key problems existing in the sphere of standardization of administrative services provision, substantiate the ways of solving these problems and develop recommendations regarding standardization of administrative services provision to improve their quality.

According to the authors, administrative services should be understood as a means of performing the functions of the state in providing public services to citizens. Administrative services are a product of economic and legal cooperation on the basis of mutually binding entity providing such services and the treatment of the subject, aimed at the establishment, modification or termination of rights and/or obligations of the subject, the subject treatment by providing aggregate formally approved, standardized operations [2, p. 83]. According to the Law of Ukraine "On Administrative Services" on the subject matter (in character) for which persons are turning to the administrative authorities, administrative services can be divided into entrepreneurial, social, land, construction, utility and housing [3].

Analysis of the main characteristics of administrative services provided in Ukraine should begin with the study of the sociological survey results [4; 5]. A survey held in 2013 by Ilko Kucheriv Foundation for Democratic Initiatives and Kyiv International Institute of Sociology at the request from the Center for Political and Legal Reforms covered 109 cities and towns in all regions of Ukraine including the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

During 2009 – 2013 Ukraine's administrative service system experienced positive shifts which translated into the growing degree of public satisfaction from 40.1 to 46.5 % and the shrinking percentage of respondents dissatisfied with the service from 54.6 to 49.1 %.

Among the key reasons behind these dynamics the simplification and acceleration of the general procedure of providing certain types of administrative services are worth noting, in particular [6, p. 9]:

- simplification of the company formation procedure by abolishing the separate procedure of registration with a state statistics authority and the fee for filing registration as a VAT payer;
- simplification of the procedure of issuing construction permits by introducing a risk level-based authorization system which

improved the procedure of issuing permits for construction of simple buildings with lower number of risk factors;

implementation of more transparent and convenient procedures of registering immovable property ownership by amending the Law of Ukraine "On Ownership".

It all translated into improvement of certain assessment indicators of Ukraine's registration and authorization systems in the Running a Business rating (Table 1). During the surveyed period the number of company registration procedures went down from 10 to 6 and the registration period was reduced from 27 to 21 days. The number of ownership registration procedures went down from 10 to 7 and the registration period was shortened from 114 to 27 days. In 2010 one had to spend 528 days and go through 29 formalities to procure a construction permit while by 2015 these figures became substantially lower: 64 days and 8 formalities respectively.

Table 1

Dynamics of certain assessment indicators of Ukraine's registration and authorization systems

Sub-index of the Running a Business rating	Indicator	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Company registration	Number of procedures	10	10	9	7	6	6
	Duration, days	27	27	24	22	21	21
Ownership registration	Number of procedures	10	10	10	10	8	7
	Duration, days	114	118	118	70	45	27
Construction authorization	Number of procedures	29	20	20	20	10	8
	Duration, days	528	375	375	375	73	64

Note. Data by sources [6 – 11].

However, despite the obvious progress, the problems of meeting the most important informational, ergonomic, functional and socio-psychological needs of users remain unresolved (Table 2). The main characteristics of the process of administrative services related to satisfaction of basic information, ergonomic, functional and psychosocial needs and subject to standardization include:

- 1) steps to get administrative services;
- 2) duration of administrative service delivery timeframes;
- 3) locations of bodies authorized to provide administrative services and concomitant service providers;
- 4) working hours and reception hours of administrative bodies;
- 5) regulation of applicant lines;
- 6) conditions of visiting administrative buildings;
- 7) behavior of public servants.

Visibly higher were the assessments of the quality of administrative services provided at administrative service centers (ASC) i.e., permanent working bodies or subdivisions of an executive public authority where administrative services are provided via administrators [3]. Thus, 83.6 % of respondents were satisfied with the accessibility of administrative services at these centers; 83.2 % of those surveyed found conditions of visiting a center comfortable; 86 % of applicants found the quality of service conformant with the openness criterion; 86.8 % of respondents were satisfied with the friendliness of staff and almost 84 % with their competence.

Table 2

Key problems with receiving administrative services in Ukraine from the standpoint of meeting the applicant's needs

Needs	Negative points noted by users when receiving administrative services	Percentage of respondents dissatisfied with the service, %	
		2009	2013
1	2	3	4
Informational	no explanation was provided as to what particular documents were required, so several visits were needed; too long period of handling the matter;	48.7	16.6
		24.6	16.6

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Table 2 (the end)

1	2	3	4
	lack of information needed to receive a service and unavailability of document completion samples; no explanation of reasons for denial of an administrative service; bureaucrats demand additional documents not required by law	13.9 5.8 5.8	7.6 5.1 4.9
Ergonomic	uncomfortable waiting conditions	33.5	11.0
Functional	one has to visit many other institutions (authorities, offices); small number of or inconvenient reception hours; long waiting lines; the need to buy forms and pay for concomitant services	25.1 20.2 58.1 12.8	13.3 6.4 23.0 9.3
Socio-psychological	rude (impolite) attitude of bureaucrats; demand of bribe by public officials	17.3 7.6	11.2 3.6

Note. Compiled by the authors on the basis of data by [4, p. 151–177; 5].

These centers substantially help achieve the objectives they were established for [12], including: reduction of administrative service delivery times, minimization of the number of visits by applicants, simplification of the administrative service delivery procedure, informing applicants about the requirements and the procedure of delivering administrative services provided via administrators.

Another positive point is that checklists and flowcharts cover 100 % of administrative services everywhere except Kyiv (30 %) and Lutsk (where checklists for 16 % of services were not approved). However, at some ASCs these documents are not freely accessible on the website or not fully available on information boards. The consulting and information services and visualization at all ASCs are at quite a high level, and the centers have quite comfortable waiting conditions and elementary amenities (Table 3).

However, the absence of uniform requirements to the centers' quantitative and qualitative performance indicators leads to substantial differences in service quality indicators for various regions. The most important of them include:

all the surveyed ASCs provide different lists of administrative services, with "registration of business entities" and "social services" having the lowest access;

administrator workplaces at 5 of 13 ASCs are not properly equipped for visitor reception to ensure that personal information communicated to a public servant remains unavailable to other visitors;

conditions in the majority of ASC buildings are not accommodating for handicapped visitors and visitors with children, thus preventing full-fledged interaction of these visitor categories with ASC personnel;

unavailability of concomitant services (banking services, office supplies, photocopier, telephone, Internet access, photographing for documents) limits the degree to which applicant needs are met, forcing them to waste their time looking for these services outside the ASC;

only 7 ASCs allow for advance appointment scheduling. Considering that all ASCs must provide the base list of 52 administrative services [13], appointment scheduling must be available at all the centers;

service quality feedback from applicants is collected at 9 ASCs. The remaining ASCs have no feedback mechanism, thus depriving the applicants of their right to make their opinion regarding service quality count.

Table 3

Service quality indicators of ASCs at Ukraine's regional administrative centers

List of requirements	ASC's actual performance indicators												
	Zhytomyr	Dnipropetrovsk	Ivano-Frankivsk	Kyiv	Lutsk	Lviv	Poltava	Rivne	Sumy	Ternopil	Kharkiv	Khmelnytskyi	Chernihiv
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Number of available services from the base list, including: architecture, construction, improvement	7	25	6	7	11	36	9	11	16	12	15	13	14
company registration	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	16	0	20	0	20
immovable property	0	14	29	1	12	53	0	12	7	10	1	20	5
registration of the place of residence, operations with the passport of the citizen of Ukraine	3	0	4	3	2	0	0	0	2	1	2	3	9
social services	0	0	0	1	43	0	0	0	17	0	13	0	5
Coverage of services by checklists, %	100	100	100	30	84	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Coverage of services by flowcharts, %	100	100	100	30	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Availability of an ASC website	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Equipment of administrator workplaces that ensures confidentiality of the applicant's information	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	+
Conformance of working hours with requirements of the Law of Ukraine "On Administrative Services" [3]	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+
including acceptance of applicant inquiries during these hours	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-
Provision of consultations: over the telephone	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
by e-mail	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+

Table 3 (the end)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Convenience of ASCs location considering accessibility by public transport	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Availability of complete information about all services on information boards	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-
Availability of the information and consulting desk	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Availability of waiting places	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Availability of personal hygiene rooms	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Availability of conditions for handicapped visitors	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	-
Availability of conditions for visitors with children	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
Availability of visitor parking	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+
Availability of concomitant services: banking services	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+
office supplies	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+
photocopier	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
Internet access	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-
telephone	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
photographing for documents	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Availability of visualization	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Availability of an electronic waiting line management system	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
Availability of advance appointment scheduling	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-
Notification of ready response/result	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Service quality feedback	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	+
Share of past due cases, %	0	0	2.5	1.89	0.13	10	0	0	5	1.67	5	0.53	1.55
Average waiting time, min	10 – 15	up to 10	up to 5	up to 10	up to 20	10 – 30	up to 10	n/a	up to 10	up to 15	up to 10	up to 10	up to 20

Note. Compiled by the authors on the basis of data from official websites of regional ASCs.

The monitors gave the highest number of points to the ASC in Ivano-Frankivsk (824 points) which spent UAH 2.05 million on equipping, whereas the ASC in Khmelnytskyi which received more financing (UAH 2.84 million) scored much worse (553 points). The

costs of equipping the ASC in Lutsk (UAH 10 million) look disproportionately high when compared to the score it received (721 points), since Kyiv's ASC has achieved almost the same level of service at a much lower cost of UAH 3.7 million (Fig. 1).

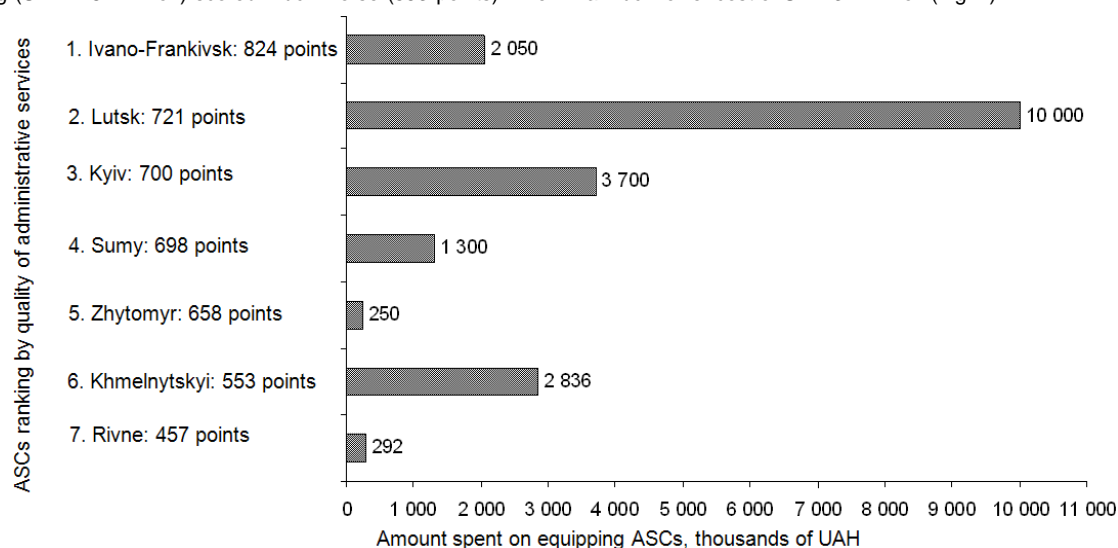


Fig. 1. Comparison of administrative service quality indicators of regional ASCs and the amount of funds spent on equipping them (compiled by the authors on the basis of data by [14])

The absence of clear relation between the quality of service and the amount of financing spent on propping up ASCs proves the need to devise measures for improving the efficiency of administrative services by implementing modern standardization of administrative services provision.

One has to distinguish between the term "standard" applied to administrative services and "standardization" of the process of providing administrative services. For that purpose, we have to analyze the existing definitions of the terms "standard" and "standardization" (Table 4).

Table 4

Definitions of the terms "standard" and "standardization"

Term	Definition	Source
Standard	"a norm, an example, a measuring gauge"	Great Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language [15, p. 1 383]
	"an example, an <i>étalon</i> , a model accepted as input data for comparison of other similar objects with them; a regulatory technical document setting out units of measurement, terms and their definitions, requirements to products and production processes"	Economic Dictionary under the general editorship by J. S. Zavadskyi [16, p. 295]
	"an official public or industry's, company's or firm's regulatory technical document setting out the necessary qualitative characteristics and requirements which a particular product or good type must comply with and also terms and their definitions"	B. A. Raizberg. Dictionary of Contemporary Economic Terms [17, p. 359]
	"a regulatory document developed on the basis of consensus and approved by a recognized authority; this document sets out, for general and multiple use, the rules, general principles or characteristics concerning various areas of activity or its results and is aimed at achieving the optimal degree of harmonization in a particular sphere"	Law of Ukraine "On Standardization" [18], International Organization for Standardization [19]
	"a document, which satisfies the requirements of all parties (consensus)"	Garmider L. D. [20]
Standardization	"implementation of uniform typical forms of organization and of achieving something"	Great Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language [15, p. 1 383]
	"activity which sets provisions for general and multiple use with regard to existing or potential tasks and is aimed at achieving the optimal degree of harmonization in a particular sphere"	Law of Ukraine "On Standardization" [18]
	"activity aimed at achieving harmonization in a particular sphere by setting provisions for general and multiple use with regard to existing or potential tasks. This activity involves development, publication and application of standards"	Wikipedia [21]
	"standardization means activity which sets provisions for general and multiple use with regard to solution of existing or possible problems and is aimed at achieving the optimal degree of harmonization in a particular sphere, resulting in the improvement of conformance of products, processes and services with their functional purpose and also in the elimination of trade barriers and facilitation of scientific and technical cooperation"	Standing Committee for the Study of Principles of Standardization (STACO) (International Organization for Standardization (ISO)) [19]

Without diminishing the importance of the legislatively provided terminological formulation of the term "standard", it is worth noting that it still contains disputable points.

Firstly, one could agree with O. Nesterov that "standards are not just rules, ... i.e., descriptions (procedures) of human activity processes but a set of permits, restrictions and bans" [22, p. 69]. The latter may not necessarily be always explicitly stated, but they still logically follow from the provisions of a standard.

Secondly, harmonization (along with unification) shall be regarded as a means but not the goal of implementing standards. Neither can the authors fully agree with the goal of standardization defined in [19] as "assurance of fulfillment by a certain product of its purpose, i.e., its ability to perform a certain function under required conditions". The authors believe that as far as services (in particular, administrative) are concerned, it would be more correct to talk not just about the end result which in this case is hard to unify and only its documentary confirmation (a report, a certificate, a license, etc.) may be standardized but also about the very process of servicing and the elements of the service environment.

Therefore, the administrative service provision standard shall mean an official document containing a list of indispensable, sufficient and representative requirements to a product as the unity of its result, service process and service environment determined by an agreement between stakeholders and aimed at simultaneous maximum efficient fulfillment by an administrative service of its purpose and minimizing the costs of interaction between service applicants and service executants.

Speaking about the provision of administrative services, standards are part of administrative regulations which set out the procedure of organizing executants' work, the procedure of actions of public servants and their interaction with administrative service executants. Compliance with these standards is mandatory and enforced by an appropriate mechanism. For example, V. Tambovtsev distinguishes a model or example of required behavior (setting product quality parameters) within the public service quality standard and the characteristics of sanctions applied to persons breaching this model. As for the mechanism of enforcing compliance with requirements of this model, an appropriate description may be either provided in the relevant standard or it must contain a reference to certain regulatory documents that provide various forms and types of liability for noncompliance with requirements of standards [3, p. 3–10].

Standardization of administrative service provision processes has a direct effect on the implementation of fundamental principles of interaction between users and public authorities during dispensation

of administrative services, because it: helps determine user expectations; facilitates two-way communication with service users in the form of consultations, surveys, etc.; stimulates executants to continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the performance; improves transparency of executant activities via publication of service standards and helps find nonconformities in the actual performance of administrative bodies with certain parameters set by standards; increases the level of user satisfaction [24, p. 15].

In Ukraine, the practice of developing administrative service provision standards is insufficiently sophisticated and the legal framework regulating this matter is presently nonexistent.

The presently invalidated Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine On the Measures of Harmonizing Administrative Services defined the administrative service standard as an "act issued in accordance with regulatory acts which set out the procedure of providing an administrative service and contain information about an administrative service and the procedure of providing it, in particular, conditions and responsible persons" [25].

Although economists [26] demonstrated a significant contribution to standardization, particularly public services in national economic growth, laws of Ukraine did not provide the term "an administrative service provision standard". Administrative service standards were replaced with the terms: an administrative service "checklist" and "a flowchart" [3]. Thus, the meaning of standardization as an important tool of improving the quality of administrative services was hollowed out. In the authors' opinion, the practice existing in Ukraine when executants may issue organizational and directive acts providing their own requirements to the quality of administrative services (setting out the number of reception hours, maximum waiting time and other parameters of evaluating the quality of administrative services) [3] does not conform with the concept of the service state, particularly with the key idea of this concept that "the state exists for people and not the other way round". In addition, according to the concept of the service state, public authority shall reorient itself toward the needs of users, their requirements and expectations.

As an example, we may cite the approach to standardization of administrative services provision in European countries. There, administrative service provision standards are an element of a broader notion of "a public service quality standard". The key idea behind implementation of standards in the public administration sphere is to create opportunities to compare the actual level of functioning of administrative bodies with certain standard requirements which, in turn, are subjected to constant revision and improvement under the pressure from the public [27].

In the United Kingdom, the Citizen's Charter defines the key principles of improving the quality of public services as the need to establish, publish and comply with standards [28]. All bodies of public administration are obliged to comply with the service standards that were implemented on the basis of this Charter:

- 1) provide fast and intelligible response to written inquiries;
- 2) receive a visitor within 10 minutes regardless of his purpose of visiting a government office;
- 3) provide unimpeded access to clear and unambiguous information regarding services and at least one number for telephone inquiries where a caller may be put through to a competent official;
- 4) provide regular consultations to clientele regarding administrative services and report on consultation results;
- 5) develop at least one procedure of handling service quality-related complaints and make it available at first request;
- 6) take all efforts to assure availability of services to all applicant categories, including persons with special needs [29, p. 9].

La charte Marianne (France) not only includes public service standards in the form of minimum acceptable quality parameters but also recommendations regarding their continuous improvement [30]. These standards are uniform for all the services provided by public authorities, which makes their implementation and application much easier. The conceptual unity of the Charter's provisions made it possible to substantially increase the effectiveness of its practical implementation by exchanging experience, even between bodies that provide different public services. The Charter's structural unity makes the use of any service standards comfortable for an ordinary user who can easily navigate and quickly find the necessary information.

Therefore, generally speaking, the national programs of EU member states define the administrative service provision standard as a publicly available official document containing information regarding a certain service, a set of quantitative or qualitative indicators which are given certain values intended to inform service applicants about the level of service they can expect from executives, and the procedure of lodging complaints and suggestions [24, p. 15]. This approach means that standards are set on the basis of studying user needs and geared toward constant improvement.

Instead, checklists and flowcharts used in Ukraine (even if they are reformatted to a uniform template with a base text and uniform structure and given the legal status of a standard) are intended to set the level which must be achieved, and that is the end of the improvement process. Interaction with applicants traditionally takes place as part of the handling of citizen inquiries, including complaints and suggestions. At the same time, problems which weren't complained about due to the lack of the initiative on the part of service applicants or the refusal of public servants to accept or register an inquiry remain outside the scope of study and analysis. Lack of control by civic organizations and users diminishes the accuracy of monitoring of compliance by administrative bodies with the requirements of law [31].

In addition, we have to distinguish between the terms an "administrative service standard" and a "service provision standard" which, when combined, produce an administrative service delivery standard.

The administrative service standard means an official document containing a set of requirements to the procedure of providing a service by public authorities based on the needs and requests of service applicants, on the one hand, and taking into account technological, financial, labor and other resource limitations of the administrative body, on the other hand. In fact, it concerns documentary confirmation and the process of providing particular types of administrative services, namely, such characteristics as immediate result indicators, regulatory acts which regulate the administrative service delivery procedure, conditions of receiving and methods of delivering an administrative service, the administrative fee amount, the payment procedure and details (if the service is fee-based), etc.

The service provision standard means an official document containing requirements applicable to the process and environment of interaction between the executant and the applicant irrespective of the particular types of administrative services. It concerns the waiting time, the facility where the service is provided, the quality of informational and consulting support, confidentiality of personal information, professionalism and accuracy of service, responses to written, telephone and online inquiries, etc.

In Ukraine, the administrative service system development concept includes the following criteria of evaluating the quality and standards of administrative service delivery [32]:

- effectiveness, i.e. meeting the need of an individual or a company for an administrative service;
- timeliness, i.e. delivery of an administrative service within the timeframe required by law;
- availability, i.e. an actual possibility for individuals and companies to request an administrative service;
- convenience providing that the needs and interests of service applicants are accommodated in the process of delivering administrative services;
- openness, i.e. unimpeded access to the information necessary to receive an administrative service which is posted on information boards in administrative bodies' buildings and on their websites, contained in official publications and booklets;
- respect of a personality, i.e. polite (respectful) attitude toward the applicant for an administrative service;
- professionalism, i.e. a proper level of qualification of the administrative body's staff.

However, in the authors' opinion, this list of criteria is not exhaustive and does not cover all needs of persons requesting administrative services, and therefore, the existing criteria provided by the Concept cannot fully assure high quality of administrative services.

To study the existing practice of dispensing administrative services the authors propose to structure the criteria which make it possible to determine the quality of an actually dispensed service. Since the administrative service is, by its economic nature, a product intended to meet the applicant's needs, the structure of the quality of this service may be shown based on its ability to meet the four groups of needs: informational, ergonomic, functional and socio-psychological (emotional) (Fig. 2).

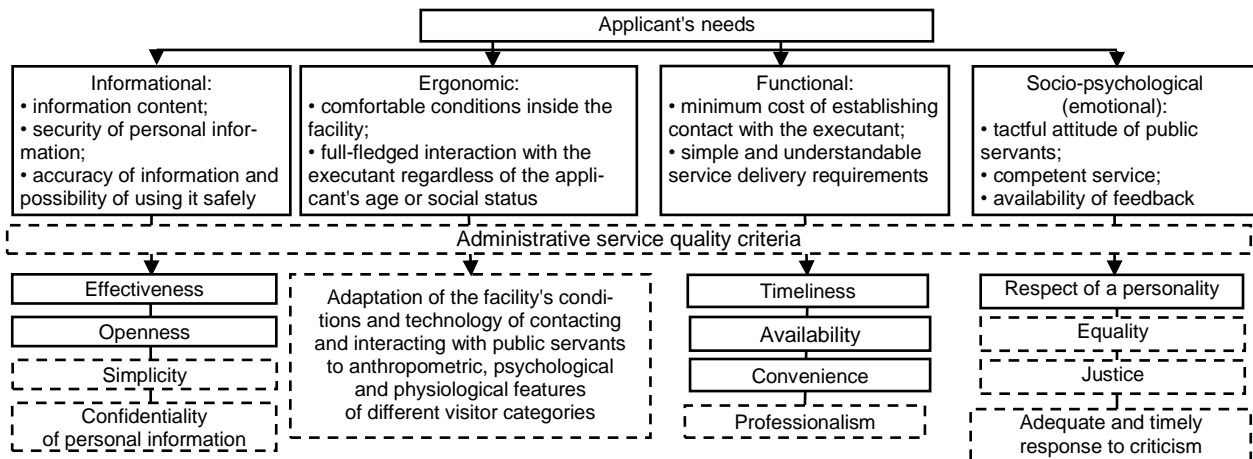


Fig. 2. The structure of the administrative service provision quality criteria from the applicant's viewpoint

Legend. - - - - proposed by the authors.

The applicant's informational needs represent a desire to receive information necessary to achieve a particular objective (personal, administrative, professional, etc.), and therefore, they are considered to be concrete (special) informational needs. These needs include the need to receive information with the content which not only fits the applicant's information request from the standpoint of his interests but fulfills the personal information confidentiality criterion.

The applicant's ergonomic needs are related to his desire to bring the process of receiving an administrative service into conformity with his anthropometric, psychological and physiological features. It means that conditions in an administrative building and technologies of contacting and interacting with public servants must be adapted for comfortable stay of persons of different age categories, including visitors with children and persons with special needs.

Functional needs may be defined as the applicant's conscious desire to minimize time and efforts he has to spend to receive an administrative service and to receive a service within the timeframe required by law without duplicating information necessary to receive a service. It may be achieved by ensuring highly-skilled and tactful service by competent professionals using optimal means and processes. The latter envisage a possibility for the user to make a rational choice of technology of receiving this service in accordance with the law (a possibility of placing an online or remote inquiry and receiving administrative services in one place, even if a service is provided jointly by several bodies, via the so-called "single window", etc.).

The applicant's socio-psychological (emotional) needs mean personal moral satisfaction from communication with personnel authorized to provide administrative services who helped solve or facilitated solution to the user's problem, including complaints regarding the quality of the service.

In the authors' opinion, the existing criteria should be supplemented with no less important criteria of administrative service quality, including:

simplicity, i.e. the format of informational presentation of administrative service terms and conditions must be sufficiently simple and understandable for the applicant, particularly its terminology;

equality, which means that conditions of receiving a service must be equal for all the applicants regardless of their age, gender or social status. Giving privileges (dispensing a service ahead of the waiting line, unlawful expedition or simplification of the administrative service dispensation procedure) to certain applicants who have personal contacts with public servants or financially stimulating them is unacceptable;

justice, which implies that if a service was denied the applicant must be provided a reasonable explanation of the reasons for the denial. If the applicant disagrees with this decision he must have the right to protect his interests infringed in the course of dispensation of an administrative service by appealing the executant's actions and demand compensation of damages caused by an improper dispensation of a service;

confidentiality of personal information which means security of applicant's trade secrets and private information and possibility of interacting with public servants one-to-one, without witnesses;

adaptation of the facility's conditions and technology of contacting and interacting with public servants to anthropometric, psychological and physiological features of different visitor categories which implies that the executants' duties must include assurance of conformance of the service environment with the applicable sanitary norms, creation of comfortable conditions for staying in an administrative building, and implementation of an efficient technology of contacting and interacting with public servants for different visitor categories (elderly people, visitors with children, people with special needs, etc.);

adequate and timely response to criticism; this criterion envisages the applicant's right to make his opinion regarding the compliance of the administrative body with standard requirements count. This right may be realized by creating efficient feedback mechanisms as part of the administrative body's work on determining applicant needs, reservations and suggestions and resolving conflict situations arising as a result of user complaints.

Thus, the practice of administrative services provision in Ukraine proves insufficient sophistication of the administrative service standardization institute which has a negative effect on the quality of administrative services, creates breeding conditions for breach

of regulations and abuse of power by public officials, and forms a biased attitude in applicants toward the entire administrative service system. At the present stage of the administrative reform it is important to create a number of regulatory and organizational preconditions for standardization of services provided by administrative bodies, first of all at ASCs. The effectiveness of these processes may be substantially improved by legislative implementation of administrative service quality criteria in the administrative service standardization institute to meet all the needs of people applying for administrative services. In particular, the criteria provided by the administrative service system development concept must be supplemented by the criteria of simplicity, equality, justice, confidentiality of personal information, adaptation of the facility's conditions and technology of contacting and interacting with public servants to anthropometric, psychological and physiological features of different visitor categories, and adequate and timely response to criticism.

Further research will be aimed at the studying and implementation in Ukraine of the world's best experience regarding administrative service quality standards and substantiation of rational "business processes" of dispensing various types of administrative services.

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СОЦІАЛЬНА СФЕРА – ВАЖЛИВИЙ ЧИННИК ВІДРОДЖЕННЯ СІЛЬСЬКИХ ТЕРИТОРІЙ: СТАН, ПРОБЛЕМИ, ШЛЯХИ ЇХ РОЗВ'ЯЗАННЯ

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Підкреслено, що українське село, на жаль, продовжує занепадати. І кількість сіл у нашій країні щороку зменшується. Серед причин цього негативного явища називають складні умови проживання, професійну й культурну ізоляваність, плінність молодих кадрів. У статті наведено чисельність сільських поселень, у яких немає дітей, молоді. Автори статті заострюють увагу на складних соціальних проблемах у сільській місцевості. Особлива увага приділена аналізу та оцінюванню стану соціальної сфери, на основі чого зроблено висновок, що жодна ланка соціальної сфери села нині не задовольняє реальних потреб населення. Зауважено, що сільський житловий фонд фізично й морально зношений, із низьким рівнем комфортності. Зазначено, що гострою продовжує залишатись проблема благоустрою сільських населених пунктів. Незадовільний стан житлових умов на селі, водозабезпечення сільських жителів негативно позначається на стані їх здоров'я. Наведено дані про значне скорочення в сільській місцевості закладів, де жителі села могли б отримати медичну допомогу чи медичні послуги. Зазначено, що основними медичними закладами тут залишаються фельдшерсько-акушерські пункти. Але, як впливає зі здійсненого аналізу, й мережа останніх зменшується.

Автори детально розкривають особливості сільського освітнього середовища. Зокрема, зазначено, що далеко не в усіх сільських населених пунктах місцеві жителі можуть отримати необхідні освітні послуги. Також підкреслено роль культури у відродженні сільських територій, проаналізовано сучасний стан цієї сфери. Обґрунтовано необхідність комплексного підходу до подальшого розвитку соціальної сфери села як важливого чинника відродження сільських територій, поліпшення житлових умов на селі, формування привабливості сільських територій, перш за все для молоді, та шляхи досягнення останнього.

Ключові слова: соціальна сфера, сільська територія, соціальна інфраструктура, послуги.