

## **THE RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS TO CIVIL SOCIETY**

Social movements are defined as large informal groups of people (and sometimes as formal groups) trying to achieve common goals, to make some changes in society.

Social movements are linked with other important social processes. Nowadays, people prefer living in large cities instead of small villages and towns. It is called 'urbanization'. People with common goals find each other and organize a social movement. Social movements typically emerge in places where many people are gathered together. That's why first social movements addressed problems important for workers of the same region or even the same manufacture. Many modern social movements were created in universities, where a lot of people studied. Social movements helped to establish modern principles of democracy, freedom of speech and political rights.

There are many different types of social movements. Some of them try to change usual social norms, and often legislation in this field. Trade unions fight to increase rights of workers. Green movement is aimed to save our planet by providing a set of special ecological laws. Radical movements are aimed to change entire value systems. The most famous example of such social movements is American Civil Rights Movement. In opposite, occur conservative movements, aimed to save existing norms and values. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a lot of new social movements emerged: feminist movement, pro – choice movement, civil rights movement, environmental movement, free software movement, gay rights movement, peace movement, anti – nuclear movement, alter – globalization movement etc.

Social movements are very important to civil society as they help people to express their ideas, to find other people thinking in the same way, to be heard by society and government, to change their lifestyle and environment in the way they really want to.

Civil society is composed of the totality of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that form the basis of functioning society as opposed to the force – backed structures of a state (regardless of that state’s political system) and commercial institutions of the market. Civil societies are often populated by organizations, such as registered charities, development non – governmental organizations, community groups, women’s organizations, faith – based organizations, professional organizations, trade unions, self – help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.

In modern society role of these organizations is growing. Professional unions and business associations in developed countries perform more and more functions that used to be performed by state bodies. These unions are self-regulatory bodies for branches, industries and fields of activities. For example, in the field of healthcare, education, and in a lot of socially important industries (in particular, transportation, stock exchange, food industry, accounting and audit etc). These organizations are at the same time perform function of a civil control for activity of state bodies. I am interested in studying the role of civil society organizations because increasing their role is very important for Ukraine.