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Public Self-Organization Bodies in the System of Local Self-Government Authorities

Public self-organization body (PSOB) is a form of local community members' participation in solving local problems either on their own or through the mediation of other representative bodies of local self-government. According to Article 5 of the Local Self-Government Act, PSOB is an independent element of the system of local self-government authorities [1]. In general, self-organization is a manifestation of direct democracy at the local level, which results in the creation of representative bodies – public self-organization bodies by village, town, or city residents.

According to Article 2 of the Public Self-Organization Bodies Act, PSOBs are representative bodies established by citizens legally residing in villages, towns, cities or their parts with the aim of solving the tasks provided for by this Act. [2] Part 2 of Article 3 of the Act determines a comprehensive list of legal forms of PSOBs that can function as house, street, block, neighborhood, city district, village, and settlement committees [2].

Self-organization manifests the following features: 1) formation only on the public initiative; 2) multilevel nature (house, district, block, etc.); 3) functioning till achieving a certain result; 4) acting with a corporate status or without it [3, p. 282].

At the legislation level PSOBs' activity is provided for by the Constitution of Ukraine, the Local Self-Government Act and the Public Self-Organization Bodies Act, which thoroughly regulate the establishment, operation, and legal status of PSOBs. In addition, a number of local legal acts (statutes of local communities, public self-organization body regulations, etc.) relate to regulating PSOBs' activity.

PSOBs are the closest to the people entities through which the local community can decide local issues. The special role conferred on PSOB as a representative of the local community's interests is evidenced by the adoption of a separate Act to regulate relations connected with its activities.

It is PSOB's collegial nature – the possibility to form commissions, working groups, and other bodies [2] to ensure its operating – that makes it an effective means of protecting the interests of a particular territory residents.

Scientists emphasize the duality of PSOB's legal nature. A. Zdioruk, in particular, notes that on the one hand, implementing powers of the village, town and city councils in the expression of the will of the population in solving local problems, PSOBs serve as authorities. On the other hand, carrying out activities on a voluntary basis, they acquire the features of non-governmental organizations [4].

These bodies are related to a direct form of self-government and, if necessary, they participate in the discussion of representative authorities' activities [5, p. 3]. As

correctly noted by D. Koltsov, PSOBs are the collective form of exercising citizens' rights to participate in local self-government [5, p. 7]. In addition, they act as mediators between other local authorities and population [5, p. 10].

Although PSOBs are part of local self-government authorities and operate within their system, they are distinguished by the specific manner and procedure of formation, competence, and area of activity. Also, in the hierarchical structure of local self-government authorities PSOBs are accountable to and controlled by, on the one hand, the residents that have voted for them, on the other hand – the relevant councils [2].

PSOBs have both their own powers granted under the Constitution and laws of Ukraine by the village, town, city or city district (if established) council and delegated ones, additionally conferred on them by the relevant council [2].

PSOBs are an integral part of the system of local self-government due to their proximity to the public and broad competence in solving different local problems.

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