SECTION «LAW SCIENCES»

SOCIAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE RULE OF LAW IN UKRAINE

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Abstract. The subject of the research is the transformation of the rule-of-law state in Ukraine in the context of democratic development, European integration, globalisation, institutional change, and the need to ensure the effective protection of human rights and freedoms. Particular attention is devoted to the relationship between the rule of law, constitutionalism, civil society, democratic governance, the separation of powers, judicial independence, legal culture, and the social responsibilities of the state. The study also considers the influence of globalisation on the functional capacity and sovereignty of the nation-state, including the growing role of supranational institutions and transnational actors. *Methodology*. The methodology combines general scientific and special legal approaches. Dialectical and systemic methods are used to examine the rule-of-law state as a dynamic and internally balanced social and legal system; analysis and synthesis are applied to identify its essential characteristics and the interdependence of legal, political, social, and economic factors; the historical-legal method is employed to trace the evolution of constitutionalism and the idea of the rule-of-law state; the comparative-legal method allows Ukrainian developments to be considered in the broader European context; the formal-legal method is used to interpret constitutional principles, legal guarantees, and institutional mechanisms; and the axiological approach makes it possible to assess the role of human dignity, justice, equality, freedom, and human rights as fundamental values of a democratic state

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governed by the rule of law. *Purpose.* The purpose of the research is to clarify the social and legal foundations of the contemporary rule-of-law state, to identify the principal obstacles to its consolidation in Ukraine, and to determine the conditions necessary for transforming constitutional declarations into effective legal and institutional practice. *Results.* The analysis demonstrates that the rule-of-law state cannot be reduced to the formal existence of a constitution, legislation, courts, or other public institutions. Its real functioning requires the supremacy of law over public authority, the priority of natural and fundamental human rights, mutual responsibility of the state and the individual, effective constitutional review, genuine judicial independence, legal certainty, political pluralism, access to justice, freedom of the media, and a sufficiently developed level of legal consciousness and legal culture. A decisive role belongs to civil society, which acts as an autonomous sphere of social self-organisation, articulates public interests, exercises public control over state institutions, and protects individuals against arbitrary interference by public authorities. The research further shows that Ukraine's progress towards a democratic rule-of-law state is constrained by systemic institutional weaknesses, corruption, inconsistent implementation of constitutional principles, deficiencies in access to justice, insufficient accountability of public officials, pressure on the judiciary and media, and the persistence of formal rather than substantive approaches to legal statehood. At the same time, European integration creates an important framework for modernising public institutions, strengthening democratic standards, and aligning the national legal order with European values. *Conclusions.* The study concludes that the consolidation of the rule of law in Ukraine requires not only legislative and institutional reform but also a profound transformation of legal culture, public administration, political responsibility, and relations between the state and civil society. In the conditions of global transformation, the state remains a necessary guarantor of stability, security, social protection, and human rights; however, its legitimacy and effectiveness increasingly depend on its ability to operate within legal limits, respond to global challenges, and preserve a human-centred democratic orientation.

INTRODUCTION

The transformation of the rule-of-law state in Ukraine is one of the most significant socio-legal challenges of contemporary constitutional development. Its relevance is determined by the need to reconcile the constitutional proclamation of Ukraine as a democratic and rule-of-law state with the practical effectiveness of legal institutions, the real protection of human and citizens' rights and freedoms, the accountability of public authorities, and the stability of democratic procedures. These issues acquire particular importance under the combined influence of European integration, globalisation, institutional reforms, security challenges, and the consequences of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. In this context, the quality of legislation alone is insufficient: the consolidation of the rule of law also depends on the independence of the judiciary, constitutional review, legal certainty, political pluralism, access to justice, freedom of the media, a developed civil society, and a mature legal culture. The problem therefore requires an integrated analysis that combines legal, political, social, and philosophical dimensions and considers the rule-of-law state not merely as a formal constitutional formula but as a practical model of relations between public authority, society, and the individual. ***Scientific Novelty.*** The scientific novelty of the study lies in the integrated socio-legal interpretation of the transformation of the rule-of-law state in Ukraine through the interrelationship between constitutionalism, democratic governance, civil society, legal culture, European integration, and global transformation. The study develops the understanding of the rule-of-law state as a dynamic and internally balanced system in which the supremacy of law over public power must be complemented by the substantive priority of fundamental human rights, mutual responsibility of the state and the individual, effective institutional guarantees, and the capacity of civil society to exercise public control. Particular attention is paid to the fact that globalisation does not eliminate the state but changes the conditions under which it performs its functions, placing additional requirements on state institutions in the spheres of security, social protection, information policy, human rights, and democratic legitimacy. The research thus links the internal transformation of Ukrainian statehood with broader European and global processes and identifies the development of legal civil society as a decisive condition for converting constitutional principles into sustainable

institutional practice. ***Purpose and Research Objectives.*** The purpose of the research is to clarify the social and legal foundations of the contemporary rule-of-law state, to identify the principal problems and contradictions that impede its effective consolidation in Ukraine, and to determine the legal, institutional, social, and cultural conditions necessary for strengthening democratic and rule-of-law statehood in the context of European integration and global transformations. To achieve this purpose, the study addresses the following research objectives: (1) to examine the conceptual foundations and essential characteristics of a democratic rule-of-law state; (2) to analyse the relationship between the rule of law, constitutionalism, separation of powers, judicial independence, human rights, and civil society; (3) to identify the principal institutional and socio-political factors that weaken the practical implementation of the rule of law in Ukraine; (4) to assess the importance of legal culture, legal consciousness, and civic participation for the development of rule-of-law statehood; (5) to determine the influence of European integration and globalisation on the changing functions and responsibilities of the national state; and (6) to substantiate the conditions under which the constitutional idea of a democratic and rule-of-law state may become a stable element of Ukrainian legal and political reality. ***Research Methodology.*** The methodological framework combines general scientific and special legal methods. The dialectical method is used to examine the rule-of-law state in its development, contradictions, and interaction with changing social and political conditions. The systemic and system-structural approaches make it possible to consider the state, civil society, the legal system, constitutional institutions, and human rights mechanisms as interconnected elements of a single socio-legal order. Analysis and synthesis are employed to identify the essential features of the rule-of-law state and to integrate separate legal, political, social, and economic factors into a coherent conceptual framework. The historical-legal method is applied to trace the evolution of constitutionalism and the concept of the rule-of-law state, while the comparative-legal method is used to correlate Ukrainian developments with European legal traditions and institutional models. The formal-legal method supports the interpretation of constitutional principles and the normative requirements imposed on public authorities. Methods of generalisation and logical abstraction are used to formulate broader conclusions concerning legal culture,

civil society, globalisation, and the transformation of state functions. The methodological pluralism of the research is intended to ensure that both the formal-juridical and substantive social dimensions of the problem are adequately reflected. ***Logic of Presentation.*** The research material is presented according to a consistent movement from general theoretical foundations to specific Ukrainian problems and then to their broader European and global context. First, the study outlines the relationship between democracy, constitutionalism, the rule of law, and fundamental rights, and explains the formal and substantive dimensions of the rule-of-law state. Second, it examines the institutional characteristics of such a state, including the separation of powers, constitutional control, judicial independence, legal responsibility, legal certainty, and effective protection of rights. Third, the analysis focuses on the Ukrainian context, identifying the principal obstacles to the practical implementation of constitutional principles and emphasising the role of civil society, legal culture, and civic participation. Fourth, the study considers European integration and globalisation as factors that simultaneously constrain and transform national statehood, alter the distribution of public functions, and increase the importance of effective governance and human-centred state policy. This logic of presentation makes it possible to connect doctrinal analysis with contemporary institutional realities and to formulate conclusions concerning the conditions necessary for the further consolidation of a democratic and rule-of-law state in Ukraine.

1. Democratic and Constitutional Foundations

A democratic state governed by the rule of law is founded on the interdependence of popular sovereignty, constitutional limitation of public authority, and the real protection of fundamental human rights. Democracy cannot be reduced solely to electoral procedures or to the formal principle of majority rule; it also requires political participation, the possibility of organised opposition, peaceful alternation of government, accountability of public authorities, and legal guarantees that protect individuals and minorities from arbitrary interference. In this sense, democratic legitimacy acquires substantive meaning only when the exercise of public power remains bound by law and oriented towards human dignity, freedom, equality, and justice.

Constitutionalism provides the legal framework within which these democratic principles are transformed into stable institutions and enforceable rules. The Constitution determines the basic organisation of public power, establishes the limits of state intervention, and secures the sphere of individual autonomy through rights and freedoms, while the broader social and economic order creates practical conditions for civil society to operate independently of the state. Accordingly, the relationship between democracy, constitutionalism, fundamental rights, and the rule of law must be considered as a single system of mutually reinforcing principles rather than as a set of isolated legal concepts.

An examination of this issue requires an understanding of the processes associated with the development and functioning of a democratic state governed by the rule of law at both the European and Ukrainian levels. In democratic countries, observance of the rule of law is based, inter alia, on the fulfilment by the political and legal system and the social order of the state of the following conditions: at the political level, the principle concerns the right of the majority of citizens to choose the political system and guarantees them the legal and practical possibility of political and legal participation, the organisation of an opposition, and the peaceful alternation of governments; at the social level, the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens form the basis of the entire social order; and at the economic level, private property and the free market constitute the foundation of the economic system.

Civil rights and freedoms help to distinguish the public sphere, in which the state may intervene, from the private sphere, in which state interference is restricted. A democratic state governed by the rule of law and civil society depend on the existence of private property and a free market, which enable organisations and public associations to function and thereby acquire legal and practical independence from the state that guarantees their existence [1, p. 81].

The very word democracy means rule by the people; thus, in a democratic state, the people constitute the source of government. Yet the people as a collective are incapable of directly performing most state functions other than elections and therefore do not exercise day-to-day rule. The direct holders of public authority are elected. Because such office-holders occupy the highest positions in the state, this may create the impression that they

are accountable to no one and may present their own decisions as the will of the people. From another perspective, democracy may also be understood as a type of political regime. Such a regime exists where society exercises broad influence over the activities of the state apparatus, which enjoys the support of the majority of society and is formed to a substantial extent through democratic electoral mechanisms. Democracy in this sense also requires that state activity comply with the law and respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens.

The two concepts outlined above are united in the Constitution as the principal legal act of the state. The term derives from the Latin constituere, meaning to establish, organise, arrange, and give an appropriate form. Today, a constitution is primarily a legal act of the highest authority regulating the fundamental issues of the political system and the economic organisation of the state. A constitution in this modern sense can be discussed only from the end of the eighteenth century, that is, from the Enlightenment, an era shaped by the postulate of equality before the law and by the incorporation of that postulate into the first legal acts of the American and French Revolutions. This does not mean that earlier periods lacked legal acts forming the foundations of political systems. Important constitutional and legal instruments were already known in antiquity, including in Greece. Medieval legal acts also occupy a special place in legal history, such as the English Magna Carta Libertatum of 1215, the Golden Bull of King Andrew II of Hungary of 1222, and the Privilege of Koszyce adopted in Poland in 1374. These instruments, however, were not constitutions regulating the political systems of individual states; they were primarily agreements between rulers and particular estates or political communities. This distinction is related to the division between constitutions in the factual sense and constitutions in the legal sense. A constitution in the factual sense refers to the existing system of government regardless of the legal act by which it is defined. A constitution in the legal sense presupposes a normative legal act, namely a written legal instrument regulating the fundamental systemic issues of a given state. In the legal sense, a constitution may be understood formally or materially. Today, the formal meaning is encountered most frequently, whereby the Constitution is a single written legal act, also referred to as the 'fundamental law'. In the material sense, a constitution consists of a body of legal acts regulating individual components of the political system.

2. Rule of Law in Practice

The practical value of the rule of law is revealed not by constitutional declarations alone, but by the manner in which public institutions exercise authority in everyday legal relations. A state may formally recognise democratic principles while, in practice, legislative discretion, administrative inaction, political pressure, corruption, or inconsistent application of legal guarantees weaken the protection afforded to individuals. For this reason, the rule of law must be assessed through the binding force of constitutional norms, the predictability and stability of legislation, the accountability of public officials, and the capacity of courts to provide independent and effective protection against unlawful interference by public authorities.

This practical dimension is especially important for Ukraine, where the constitutional commitment to democratic and rule-of-law statehood coexists with persistent institutional difficulties affecting access to justice, judicial independence, political responsibility, media freedom, and public trust. The comparison with broader European experience, including the role of constitutional review and the standards developed in the protection of human rights, demonstrates that the effectiveness of the rule of law depends on both the quality of legal norms and the institutions responsible for their implementation. The following analysis therefore focuses on the gap that may arise between constitutional principles and their actual operation within political, administrative, and judicial practice.

According to the Constitution, independence, sovereignty, the rule of law, and respect for human dignity are essential to the attainment of the common good. These values also include internal and external security, economic development, national heritage, and public and individual freedom. It should be stated that both the former non-democratic authorities and the newer democratic authorities in our state have often treated law instrumentally, assuming that it ultimately depends on the will of new political actors and their parties. Consequently, the law upon which the constitutional principles of a rule-of-law state are based has had insufficient strength to consolidate the democratic system. This, in turn, has resulted in numerous applications and complaints being submitted to supranational courts.

The actions of political actors sometimes conflict with constitutional democracy. The principle of the rule of law requires that constitutional norms addressed to the legislature be binding. It is generally accepted

that the legislature must act within the Constitution and that the scope of legislative discretion is determined by the limits contained in constitutional provisions. Legislative discretion constitutes a serious issue even for the Constitutional Court, which, when exercising constitutional review, must take account of the systemic principles of the Constitution and, above all, the role of the Constitution in implementing democratic principles that guarantee equal opportunities and the protection of human rights. Such conflicts very often arise from the absence of political compromise. From the perspective of the Constitutional Court, it should be noted that at an early stage it primarily acted as a guarantor of the conformity of legal norms and, over time, evolved into a guarantor of constitutional values.

The term rule of law is used to describe a state governed by democratic legal principles. This implies that every adult citizen enjoys equal rights, has access to public office, and is able, through free and fair elections, to influence the composition of the highest state bodies, while democratic procedures are binding upon the state itself. Under the Constitution of Ukraine, the state must be democratic and governed by the rule of law, which means that public authority may act only on the basis of law and within the limits established by law. For Ukraine to function as a democratic rule-of-law state, public authorities must not be able to act arbitrarily in the legal sphere, while citizens must be entitled to clear and stable legislation that does not change merely with a change of the governing party; to decisions of central and local public administration based on such legislation and treating citizens as legal subjects; to respect for the principle of equality; and to the effective functioning of an independent judiciary in which cases are adjudicated by independent judges.

In recent years, the pursuit of political objectives has often been placed above constitutional and legal norms. The failure of administrative bodies to fulfil their duties repeatedly results in official inaction, leaving citizens feeling powerless in such situations. This state of affairs may be attributable to deficiencies in Ukrainian legislation, which have contributed to the impunity of public officials. A similar situation concerns politicians. References are frequently made to the absence of grounds for holding a politician accountable by invoking the presumption of innocence, without due regard to the fact that this principle is relevant to criminal proceedings and does not exclude political responsibility. Disciplinary proceedings are

likewise rarely discussed; where they do take place, they often continue for an excessive period and subsequently terminate without meaningful consequences. At the same time, adherence to legal and ethical standards in the broad sense has deteriorated.

An example of the impunity of persons exercising public authority and using the law for their own purposes is the beating by Polish police officers of a boy who was consuming alcohol near a shop. The Strasbourg Court held that Poland had violated Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits inhuman or degrading treatment. In hospital, the victim was diagnosed with fractures of the nose, orbital bone, lower jaw, and arm. The injured person brought allegations against one of the police officers, but the district prosecutor discontinued the proceedings, relying on the explanations provided by the police. The victim appealed the decision, but initially without success. Following another appeal, the regional court set the judgment aside and remitted the case to the district court for reconsideration; the district court, however, left its earlier decision unchanged. The Strasbourg Court subsequently found unequivocally that the injuries had resulted from police violence. It held that the force used by the police had been disproportionate to the circumstances and therefore violated Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The Court further stated that the investigation into the conduct of the police officer had been superficial and lacked objectivity [2].

With regard to Ukrainian realities, manifestations of non-democratic conduct within the judiciary include corruption, which is widespread and affects the broader system of state governance. In relation to the judiciary, particular concern is caused by statements made by politicians that undermine the foundations of judicial and judicial-office independence. It must be acknowledged that the Ukrainian state does not sufficiently facilitate citizens' access to justice. Access to courts is impeded by the high costs of proceedings, while exemptions from such costs may be granted inconsistently. Citizens of Ukraine also encounter difficulties in obtaining the legal assistance guaranteed by the Constitution. Delays in proceedings and the scheduling of numerous hearings call into question the principle of concentration of evidence. The judiciary should serve to protect citizens and safeguard a democratic state governed by the rule of law. Too often,

however, judicial and prosecutorial institutions are influenced by political considerations, even though judges and prosecutors cannot properly function as political officials, as this is incompatible with the principles of social democracy.

It must be recognised that Ukraine still has a considerable distance to travel before fully becoming a democratic state governed by the rule of law, while the level of governmental adherence to the social and democratic principle of the rule of law has markedly declined. Freedom of the media provides a clear example. Increasing censorship demonstrates the influence of governing parties over the media. Such practices are inconsistent with a democratic rule-of-law state, which requires media freedom and political pluralism, freedom of expression, and the corresponding responsibility for its exercise. Persistent surveillance and wiretapping of Ukrainian citizens are techniques associated with the former socialist system and have nothing in common with democracy.

Ukraine is not, however, the only European country in which constitutional provisions concerning a democratic state governed by the rule of law do not always operate effectively. Similar problems arise in other states. One example is the 'Ten Principles of Attac for a Democratic and Social Constitution' advanced by Attac, an anti-globalisation organisation whose aim is to democratise Europe and promote respect for social principles. The association argues that the current form of the European Union constitutes a serious obstacle to deepening democracy, preserving fundamental rights, and ensuring social justice. In this view, the democratic deficit results from governance through a series of treaties that impose a neoliberal economic model on Member States and, more broadly, on the world. It has therefore been argued that a new treaty should be built on the best democratic models and should be founded on such principles as human dignity, law, representative and participatory democracy, social security and the prevention of exclusion, solidarity, equality between women and men, and support for and commitment to peace. It has also been emphasised that such a treaty should provide clear mechanisms of direct democracy.

The examples considered above indicate that democracy may be undergoing a period of decline and, by failing to keep pace with globalisation, may contribute to the erosion of the rule of law. In such circumstances, a fundamental question arises: what is the source of the problem?

Are public officials in individual states responsible for this situation, or does the problem lie in the existing law itself? Without addressing this question, it is difficult for Ukraine and Europe to identify viable prospects and solutions for developing democratic states governed by the rule of law. The study of legal thought from earlier historical periods provides grounds for concluding that ancient humanistic thought, together with the state-and-legal views and ideas of advanced and progressive thinkers, unquestionably formed the intellectual foundations for the subsequent development of humanistic concepts that eventually underpinned the theory of the rule-of-law state.

3. Concept and Core Features

The concept of the rule-of-law state combines a formal requirement that public authority be legally limited with a substantive requirement that law itself be oriented towards the protection of the individual. Its formal dimension concerns the subordination of state power to legal rules and the establishment of clear boundaries for governmental intervention, whereas its substantive dimension gives priority to human and citizens' rights and freedoms as fundamental social values. These two dimensions are inseparable, because legality loses its democratic meaning when law becomes merely an instrument of authority, while the proclamation of rights remains ineffective without institutions capable of securing their implementation.

From this perspective, the rule-of-law state should be understood as an internally balanced socio-legal order in which the interests of the state, civil society, and the individual are coordinated through law and reciprocal responsibility. Its institutional architecture includes the separation of powers, constitutional review, equality before the law, judicial protection of rights, effective control over public authorities, and a developed legal culture. At the doctrinal level, these elements reflect both the European traditions of the Rechtsstaat and the rule of law and the development of Ukrainian legal thought, which has adapted these principles to the historical and constitutional conditions of national state-building.

A rule-of-law state represents a higher evolutionary type of state. Its essence, like that of any state, includes both formal and substantive dimensions. The formal dimension consists in the limitation of public

authority by law: the scope within which state power may be exercised, including the extent of its intervention in the private sphere, is legally constrained. In this context, law incorporates the postulates of natural-law theory. It is specifically within a rule-of-law state that public authority seeks to minimise interference in the spheres of individual life while continuing to perform the necessary functions of governance.

The substantive dimension of a rule-of-law state lies in recognising the priority of human and citizens' rights and freedoms and proclaiming them as the highest value. Such recognition must not remain merely an aspirational idea or political wish; it must be directly embodied in national legislation. In particular, the Constitution of Ukraine of 1996, as an act of direct effect, not only declares the priority of citizens' rights but also establishes the operation of constitutional principles and the legal hierarchy governing acts such as resolutions of the Government of Ukraine and other subordinate normative acts. Accordingly, the essence of the rule-of-law state may be understood as the integration of its formal and socio-legal dimensions. The actual construction of such a state is, of course, a lengthy and complex process. A clear understanding of its essence helps determine the appropriate course of development, establish priorities, and demonstrate the need to implement the idea of the rule-of-law state in practice.

A rule-of-law state is an institution for governing social life that enables the legal system reliably to protect citizens, their lives, freedom, property, and personal dignity from all forms of arbitrariness. The more effective such protection is, the higher the level of civilisation attained by the state. Since there may be many such levels, the philosophical and legal model of the rule-of-law state should be understood not as a fixed constant but as a changing sociocultural category.

As an internally balanced social system, the rule-of-law state presupposes the primacy of law over power. Well-designed legal constraints reduce the likelihood of arbitrary government, prevent the administrative apparatus from exercising authority to the detriment of civil society, prohibit unjustified interference in the private lives of law-abiding citizens, and require respect for the inviolability of individual rights and freedoms, including freedom of oral and printed expression, freedom of association and assembly, political freedoms, and the inviolability of the home and correspondence.

Whereas in a non-rule-of-law state the interests of the state itself take precedence and the interests of civil society and the individual are effectively disregarded, a rule-of-law state is characterised by a fundamentally different hierarchy of priorities. The dominant position of natural-law values requires the system of positive law deliberately to pursue a strategy of mutual adaptation and balancing among the three principal groups of interests: those of the state, civil society, and the individual.

These different volitional impulses are brought into a condition of dynamic equilibrium and connected through reciprocal moral and legal responsibility.

The features of a rule-of-law state as an internally balanced social system include the following:

1. The primacy of law over power. This presupposes a system of carefully designed legal restrictions governing the activities of public authorities. Legal norms reduce the possibility of arbitrary rule and prevent any attempt by the state to exercise public power to the detriment of civil society. They prohibit state interference in the private lives of law-abiding citizens and require respect for the inviolability of individual rights and freedoms;

2. The primacy of natural law over positive law. The legislation in force within the state is based on the principles of the inalienability and inviolability of natural human rights and freedoms. Every person's natural rights to life, liberty, property, personal dignity, well-being, and happiness constitute fundamental social values protected by current legislation. Whereas a non-rule-of-law state takes into account only its own interests and effectively disregards those of civil society and the individual, a rule-of-law state follows a different hierarchy of priorities. Under this model, positive law is intended primarily to safeguard the interests of the individual and civil society and only secondarily to serve the needs of the state apparatus itself.

The priority of natural-law values requires positive law to adapt and balance the interests of the state, civil society, and the individual. The volitional impulses corresponding to these three groups of interests are brought into a relationship of stable and dynamic equilibrium and are linked by moral and legal responsibility.

The social foundation of the rule-of-law state is a self-regulating civil society that unites free citizens and places the individual, together with his

or her rights, freedoms, and interests, at the centre of public life. Its moral foundation consists of universal principles of humanism, justice, equality, personal freedom, dignity, and honour. A rule-of-law state differs from a non-rule-of-law state in the quality of its laws: they must be humane and just and must secure the inalienable rights of every person. A rule-of-law state is also a sovereign state that embodies the sovereignty of the people, nations, and national communities inhabiting its territory.

It is through sovereignty that the political nature of the state is manifested. The existence of sovereignty indicates that representative functions belong exclusively to the state and that the state has the authority to enact laws and other normative legal acts binding on all members of society [3, pp. 28-33]. A rule-of-law state is a state in which the organisation and exercise of public authority, including its relations with individuals and their associations, are founded on law. Its central idea is the legal limitation of state power; the establishment of government by laws rather than by persons; and the protection of the individual in his or her interaction with the state.

The principal features of a rule-of-law state are as follows:

1. The exercise of state power in accordance with the principle of separation into legislative, executive, and judicial branches, in order to prevent the concentration of the entirety of public authority in one set of hands, to exclude its monopolisation or usurpation by a single person, body, or social stratum, and thereby to avoid the emergence of 'terrible despotism'.

2. The existence of a Constitutional Court as a guarantor of the stability of the constitutional order: a body that safeguards constitutional legality and the supremacy of the Constitution and ensures the conformity of laws and other acts of the legislative and executive authorities with the Constitution.

3. The supremacy of law and legal principles, meaning that no body other than the highest representative (legislative) authority may repeal or amend an enacted law. All other normative legal acts (subordinate legislation) must comply with the law; where a conflict arises, the law takes precedence. Laws themselves, which may otherwise be used as a form of legalising arbitrariness – the direct opposite of law – must conform to legal principles and to the principles of the constitutional order. The operation of an unlawful or unconstitutional law may be suspended by the Constitutional Court and referred to Parliament for reconsideration.

4. Equal subjection to law of the state acting through its bodies, public officials, and citizens. A state that has enacted a law may not itself disregard it, since such conduct would create conditions for arbitrariness and permissiveness on the part of the bureaucracy at all levels.

5. Mutual responsibility of the state and the individual: the individual bears responsibility before the state, while the state is likewise accountable to the individual for failure to fulfil its obligations and for violations of legal norms conferring rights upon the individual.

6. The practical reality of fundamental human rights and individual rights and freedoms enshrined in legislation, ensured by the existence of an appropriate legal mechanism for their implementation and by the possibility of protecting them through the most effective means, namely judicial proceedings.

7. The reality and effectiveness of control and supervision over the implementation of laws and other normative legal acts, resulting in public trust in state institutions and a willingness to apply to them for the resolution of legal disputes rather than, for example, seeking redress through newspapers, radio, or television.

8. The legal culture of citizens: knowledge of their rights and duties, the ability to exercise them, and a respectful attitude towards law as opposed to 'legal nihilism' – belief in the right of force and disbelief in the force of law.

At the doctrinal level, the central foundation of a rule-of-law state is an extensive system of values and principles designed to limit public authority. This limitation means that state bodies and institutions are required to act exclusively within the framework of applicable law, whereas citizens enjoy the freedom reflected in the principle that everything not prohibited by law is permitted. The concept assumes that law is the principal element and guarantee of the proper and just functioning of the state. Democratic states seek to ensure such a condition, with the constitution playing a central role as a normative framework for those who exercise power and take decisions, especially decisions affecting legal norms.

Responsibility for ensuring compliance with rule-of-law principles is entrusted to competent bodies and institutions capable of supervising and controlling public authority. These bodies and institutions form part of a political and legal system developed over centuries through the evolution of European philosophical and legal concepts. Among the most important

foundations of the modern rule-of-law state are the German concept of the Rechtsstaat and the English concept of the rule of law. The original justification of these concepts rested on three fundamental principles. First, constitutionalism, which was to determine the organisation and functioning of the state and establish the supremacy of the constitution over lower-ranking acts, including statutes as a principal source of law. Second, the separation of powers, intended as a mechanism for preventing violations and abuses of authority by any branch or body. Third, the independence of the judiciary and of judges, which constitutes a fundamental indicator of a fair trial.

During the nineteenth century, these principles began to spread across European countries and exerted a significant influence on the formation of their political and legal systems. It should also be clearly recognised that each state, through the adoption of a range of normative acts, established its own political system in which these principles were implemented and institutions for their protection were developed, often including newly created judicial bodies. It is therefore difficult to formulate a universal and exhaustive definition of a 'rule-of-law state' governed by the rule of law. No state represents a perfect rule-of-law state, because the concept refers to an ideal type which, in Max Weber's terms, cannot exist in reality in a fully pure form.

Accordingly, the rule-of-law state should be understood as a normative standard or model of state conduct, expressed through a set of values, principles, and institutional decisions founded on the principle of legality – the rule of law – arising from a specific legal order. In relation to the present argument, it should also be noted that globalisation, although progressing gradually, tends to erode distinctions resulting from the existence of different legal systems. Thus, with regard to the legal orders of, for example, the Member States of the European Union, it is possible to speak of a common set of values that serves as an indicator of adherence to the rule of law.

The works of domestic scholars have made a significant contribution to the renewal of the theory of the rule-of-law state. They examined not only its fundamental characteristics and features but also the most important conditions for its formation. It should be noted that domestic scholars often approached critically the concept of the rule-of-law state developed by contemporary Western researchers. Such an approach may have been

justified insofar as the essence, social content, and purpose of the rule-of-law state should be assessed in light of specific historical realities, periods, and the characteristics of the dominant social stratum or class. At the same time, with respect to modern Western states and those who exercise power within them, this concept could contribute to their idealisation by emphasising their 'connection' with existing law. It is often difficult to regard any Western state simply as a protector and representative of all strata of society and as an unconditional guardian of 'general' justice, legality, and public order [4, p. 77].

The critical approach to the theory of the rule-of-law state described above was, however, not free from exaggeration. Its principal shortcoming was that, in evaluating the concept, it failed to take sufficient account of the fact that the theory had been developed as an instrument of political and ideological opposition to absolutist regimes and to the activities of supranational associations. It also neglected universal human values, principles, and ideas arising from citizens' rights and freedoms, the primacy of law under a democratic state and social order, the inviolability of legality and public order, and social justice within a rule-of-law state [4, p. 78]. A new interpretation of the rule-of-law state, which only a few years earlier had been treated as a component of the theoretical and practical development of modern Ukrainian constitutionalism, was facilitated by the dissolution of the USSR, Ukraine's acquisition of independence, and the democratisation of the political regime.

The idea of the rule-of-law state itself, within the study of the theory of state and law and Ukrainian constitutional law, clearly has deep historical roots. Accordingly, in the early 1990s it experienced a relatively rapid revival in Ukrainian legal scholarship, while its conceptual and terminological framework was enriched through the broad use of relevant definitions [5, pp. 243-269]. The ideas of the rule-of-law state were accepted with considerable unanimity and interpreted in accordance with contemporary understanding by legal scholars involved in drafting the Constitution of Ukraine of 1996 [5, p. 265]. Despite the absence of a long-established tradition of the rule-of-law state in Ukraine, discussion of its key features and characteristics in the process of Ukrainian state-building may ultimately contribute to the practical implementation of this significant idea in Ukrainian realities.

The problem of defining the content of the concept of the rule-of-law state was examined by the early twentieth-century Ukrainian thinker Bohdan Kistiakivskyi, who wrote that the rule-of-law state is the highest form of the state, a school and a laboratory in which the foundations of the future social order are developed [6, p. 75].

4. Civil Society and Legal Culture

The establishment of a rule-of-law state cannot be achieved solely through the creation of new public institutions or the formal adoption of democratic legislation. Sustainable constitutional development also depends on the existence of a law-based civil society capable of articulating social interests, exercising public oversight, defending individual rights, and responding to unlawful or unjust decisions of public authorities. Where state institutions are weak or do not fully guarantee constitutional rights and freedoms, the activity of civil society becomes particularly important as a mechanism of social self-organisation and as a practical counterbalance to arbitrary power.

At the same time, the effectiveness of civil society is closely connected with legal consciousness, legal culture, civic maturity, and the willingness of individuals to participate in public affairs. Legal culture performs not only an educational function but also a transformative, value-oriented, regulatory, communicative, and socialising role, influencing the way in which citizens perceive law and interact with state institutions. In the Ukrainian context, these factors acquire special significance because systemic institutional weaknesses, corruption, insufficient civic participation, and elements of so-called semi-democracy may prevent constitutional principles from becoming stable social practice.

Unfortunately, despite considerable efforts to ensure the rule of law, the supremacy of the Constitution, legality, and the priority of human and citizens' rights, the process of establishing a rule-of-law state in Ukraine remains impeded. A significant error of Ukrainian socio-political actors is that they tend to understand the creation of a rule-of-law state primarily as the establishment of new legal institutions intended to improve the functioning of particular public authorities. In doing so, they often overlook the fact that only a law-based civil society can provide a sustainable foundation for a rule-of-law state.

The phenomenon of a law-based civil society is arguably a key factor, given the traditions, mentality, and history of Ukrainian society, in building a rule-of-law state and consolidating democracy in Ukraine. Where traditional state institutions are unable to guarantee constitutional human and citizens' rights and freedoms, civil society assumes part of this function. By adopting its Constitution, the Ukrainian state declared its intention to become democratic and governed by the rule of law; naturally, such a transformation cannot occur immediately. Considerable time is required to reform the relevant social and state institutions and adapt them to new socio-economic and political conditions. World experience demonstrates that a rule-of-law state cannot be created on the basis of formal characteristics alone, whereas many features of Ukrainian rule-of-law statehood unfortunately remain predominantly formal. Rule-of-law statehood will remain a formal slogan and an unattainable aspiration unless several conditions are satisfied: the effective functioning of public authority; compliance by each branch of government with legal requirements; the maintenance of the supremacy of law in state activity and in all spheres of social life; the conformity of laws themselves with social ethics; and the organic combination of legitimate public authority with freedom secured within society [5, p. 247].

At the global level, the concept of the rule-of-law state is inseparable from that of the social state, which presupposes the implementation of a clear and balanced socio-economic policy. However, the aggravation of long-standing socio-economic problems in Ukraine, intensified by Russian aggression, is reflected in public disappointment regarding the ability of state institutions to guarantee constitutional rights and freedoms. This negatively affects public support for state policy, contributes to a crisis of legal consciousness, and reduces the level of law-abiding behaviour and legal culture among citizens.

The formation of a rule-of-law state is therefore substantially influenced by such characteristics of a legal society as the level of its legal culture, legal consciousness, and legal ideology. It should be emphasised that legal culture performs several specific functions simultaneously, including: (a) carrying out theoretical and organisational activities aimed at building a rule-of-law state and civil society (the transformative function); (b) forming an evaluative or axiological attitude of the individual towards rights, as well

as towards his or her own actions and their consequences (the value-oriented function); (c) ensuring the stable and dynamic functioning of the various elements of the legal system, the state, and society (the legal-regulatory function); (d) ensuring effective interaction among citizens in the legal sphere (the communicative function); and (e) developing the legal qualities of the individual (the legal-socialisation function) [7, p. 254].

According to some scholars, the problems facing Ukraine on its path towards building a rule-of-law state may be provisionally summarised as follows: 1) a systemic crisis affecting all spheres of social life; 2) the absence of a coherent vision of how to overcome the crisis; 3) confrontation between the executive and legislative branches of power; 4) the lack of structural coherence and systemic organisation of state authority; 5) the presence in society of anti-Ukrainian and anti-state political forces and public groupings; 6) widespread disrespect for laws and the Constitution; 7) systemic corruption within the state apparatus; 8) insufficient progress in administrative and judicial reform; 9) the slow formation of an organic national legal system; 10) significant pressure on the official press and problems concerning freedom of information; 11) substantial violations of citizens' rights and freedoms; 12) the development of features of a police-fiscal state; 13) insufficient financing of positive developments in local self-government; and 14) the insufficient positive impact of the Human Rights Commissioner and the Constitutional Court of Ukraine [8, pp. 11-13]. It may therefore be argued that the further development of the rule-of-law state requires Ukrainian society to resolve three complex and large-scale tasks. First, it must achieve European norms and standards of organisation in the economic, political, social, and cultural spheres. Second, it must identify strategic guidelines for Ukraine's future in light of the principal trends of social development in Europe and the world. Third, the state and society must make consistent progress in accordance with the selected strategic directions.

One of the key political and legal challenges to the establishment of a democratic rule-of-law state in Ukraine is overcoming so-called semi-democracy, which is generated by low civic and political activity among the population, the prevalence of 'shadow' forms of interaction among different political forces, and ineffective mechanisms for representing the interests of diverse social groups and strata.

As a result of resolving the problems discussed above, Ukraine should develop a system of socio-political organisation that reflects the sociocultural and mental characteristics of the Ukrainian people, realises their creative potential, and develops in accordance with the principal trends of European and broader civilisational progress. This necessarily entails a transition from the Soviet system to an original and genuinely Ukrainian socio-political model [8, p. 18].

5. European Integration and Reform

European integration is not merely an external direction of Ukrainian foreign policy; it also functions as an internal framework for modernising the legal and institutional foundations of the state. The approximation of Ukrainian practice to European democratic and rule-of-law standards requires qualitative changes in public governance, the judiciary, local self-government, the protection of rights, and the provision of public services. In this context, integration processes create additional incentives for transforming formal constitutional commitments into functioning mechanisms of accountability, legality, participation, and effective protection of the individual.

Such transformation, however, cannot be reduced to the mechanical adoption of foreign legal models or to legislative approximation alone. It requires the development of citizens' political and legal culture, greater attention to public opinion, expanded participation in local self-government, and a consistent reorientation of public institutions towards service to the individual and society, while national interests remain protected. European integration therefore becomes meaningful for the rule-of-law state to the extent that institutional reform is accompanied by civic maturity, responsible governance, and the practical implementation of democratic values in everyday constitutional and legal relations.

European integration processes in Ukraine make a significant contribution to building a rule-of-law state and consolidating European values within the Ukrainian political system. European integration, which implies an improvement in the population's standard of living, is inevitably accompanied by efforts to reduce discrepancies between European and Ukrainian realities, ideas, values, mechanisms, and developmental dynamics. This clearly requires the application of a different model of

public governance. At the same time, the transformation process described above must be accompanied by the protection and preservation of national interests [9, pp. 1-18].

The successful development of Ukraine as a democratic rule-of-law state depends on the fulfilment of several conditions: 1. developing citizens' political, legal, and democratic culture, including their ability and willingness to exercise their own rights and freedoms, that is, their legal and civic maturity; 2. reorienting state authorities and local self-government bodies towards the provision and delivery of public services; 3. developing the institution of public opinion, ensuring its continuous monitoring, and taking it into account in the activities of state authorities and local self-government; and 4. increasing citizens' participation in the exercise of local self-government.

Ultimately, for the concept of a democratic rule-of-law state to become firmly rooted in the domestic legal system and to serve as a reference point for actual constitutional and legal relations, a radical and qualitative modernisation of the key institutions of the state and society is required, including the highest state authorities, institutions of the political system, the judiciary, local self-government, and the legal system. In addition, the legal consciousness of a substantial part of Ukrainian society must change from a paternalistic model reliant on the state to provide various benefits to an individual-rights model in which each citizen demands the effective protection of rights and actively supervises the performance of state institutions. Only then will the rule-of-law state cease to be an unattainable ideal and become a generally recognised and effectively implemented constitutional principle integrating other constitutional foundations and determining the direction of further constitutional development of the state and society. For a democratic rule-of-law state in Ukraine to become the basis of social life and the life of every citizen rather than merely a political declaration, state and civil institutions must be established or reformed where they are absent or subject to intense pressure from a narrow ruling group. Civil society is the principal institution upon which the existence of a democratic rule-of-law state depends, since it protects the interests of individual citizens in their relations with state institutions, influences the directions of public policy, and exercises public oversight over the executive branch. Civil society must formulate requirements for the highest

state authorities, actively supervise the activities of public institutions, and foster social intolerance towards unjust or unlawful decisions adopted by public officials.

For the first time in Ukraine's history, the Constitution of Ukraine of 1996 defines Ukraine as a democratic state governed by the rule of law. The idea of the rule-of-law state, enshrined in Article 1 of the Constitution, is one of the most important foundations of the constitutional order. Despite the considerable body of research, it remains difficult to identify with certainty which features should demonstrate the existence of a rule-of-law state in a particular polity and which problems impede its development in Ukraine.

6. Globalisation and State Transformation

Globalisation has altered the environment in which contemporary states perform their political, legal, economic, social, and information functions. The intensification of cross-border flows of capital, information, technology, culture, and people, together with the rapid development of digital communication, weakens the traditional separation between domestic and international processes and increases the influence of supranational institutions and transnational actors. As a result, sovereignty is no longer exercised in complete institutional isolation, while national governments must take account of global networks, external interdependence, and decisions whose consequences extend beyond state borders.

These transformations do not necessarily imply the disappearance of the nation-state; rather, they change the conditions of its effectiveness and increase the range of responsibilities placed upon public authority. The state remains a key guarantor of human security, social protection, public order, and fundamental rights, but it must also adapt its governance priorities, information policy, administrative capacity, and participation in regional and global institutions. The growth of non-state and supranational actors, including international organisations, financial institutions, and transnational corporations, therefore requires a reassessment of the distribution of public functions and of the capacity of the state to preserve democratic legitimacy while responding to global challenges.

Modern media play an exceptionally important role in shaping the image of the world as a global environment, since they contribute to the formation of spatial and temporal relations. The increasing accessibility

of global space and the simultaneous presence of events presented by the media may lead to confusion and distortion in perceptions of space and time. International flows of capital, money, information, and culture disrupt the linear unity of these two dimensions and produce their compression. The former periphery and centre appear in the media as a single space that can be entered effortlessly by selecting the appropriate channel. The multimedia world is characterised by the impression that all events, including those occurring in the most remote regions of the globe, take place simultaneously and are equally 'tangible'.

The Internet plays an important role in sustaining this perception; in cyberspace, geographical distance and time zones are effectively neutralised in favour of the informational value of a message that is simultaneously accessible throughout the world. Theorists of globalisation emphasise that this phenomenon is more visible and tangible in culture than in the economy. Global cultural phenomena may be described through five dimensions: media, technological, financial, ideological, and ethnic. Despite their considerable autonomy, these dimensions are interconnected and mutually penetrating, together forming an 'imagined world' of a global character. The principal challenge that globalisation poses to the state is the need to change priorities clearly and rapidly. Globalisation does not require the disappearance of the institution of the state, but it places increasingly demanding responsibilities upon it, above all in relation to human life. This is an extremely important domestic-political function of every state, because the most fundamental human right is the right to life. Moreover, under conditions of globalisation and the emergence of new information technologies, the burden on society and on the individual increases as a result of weakened or disrupted social ties and social stratification, which during the pandemic acquired the ironic designation 'social distancing'. This strengthens the historical role of the state as a guarantor of stability, responsible above all for providing necessary assistance to the most vulnerable groups and protecting society from waves of violence.

Many analysts associate solutions to global problems with the more active participation of states in regional integration processes and in the development of global political networks. At the same time, differences in levels of historical development and in political, legal, and economic culture remain significant. As the experience of the European Union demonstrates,

no one can state with certainty how much time will be required to resolve all existing problems. Nevertheless, against the background of the emergence of new actors of globalisation, including anti-globalisation movements that place law and morality at the centre of development, the state, whether it wishes to or not, is increasingly drawn into the resolution of global problems. Many existing and emerging problems can be addressed most effectively only with the participation of nation-states. This is particularly true of increasing social isolation and the alienation of individuals from society. The state participates directly in addressing the challenges associated with constructing an architecture of global governance; other actors, despite their importance, cannot perform this role to the same extent. This is possible, however, only if the state itself changes so as not to lose competitiveness in the world. At the same time, globalisation blurs the boundary between domestic and international policy and compels national political elites to assess more carefully the quality and consequences of their decisions and the advantages and disadvantages of participation in global systems. Globalisation also places higher demands on public-administration personnel, including the development of science and education, knowledge of the characteristics of major international counterparts and competitors, foreign-language competence, and understanding of civilisational differences. The authority of public power depends not only on the effectiveness of public policy, the successful implementation of state programmes, and the fulfilment of governmental commitments to the population. An effective state information policy, including image and reputation policy, also plays an important role in this process.

Globalisation requires a transformation of the role of the state in addressing the problems of the past, present, and future. It challenges assumptions and traditions previously regarded as immutable and changes the nature of state policy and its security priorities. It is impossible to stop this process or 'bury' globalisation, as some analysts have attempted to do; it can only be adjusted and adapted to contemporary circumstances. One of the principal problems of globalisation is the uneven nature of its consequences for the participants in integration processes. This issue may be examined through the subjects and objects of these processes. From a philosophical perspective, subject and object remain in a continuing relationship of opposition. For this reason, many views of the contemporary world

order are based on the subject-object contradiction within globalisation. The former may be understood as global leaders that shape and advance the globalisation process, while the latter are required to operate according to rules established by those subjects. Moreover, contemporary subjects of globalisation may be not only state actors but also supranational actors. This view is supported by U. Beck, who argues that globalisation reflects processes in which states and their sovereignty become integrated into networks of transnational actors and gradually subject to their institutional capacities, value orientations, and identity characteristics [10, p. 150]. It may therefore be argued that these actors constitute the 'institutional foundation' of globalisation. The principal participants in integration processes include nation-states, central banks participating in the global economic system, international non-governmental organisations representing the interests of various groups, international governmental organisations comprising associations of sovereign states, transnational corporations, and international financial institutions [11, pp. 21-26].

There are ultimately different views of this phenomenon, ranging from the positions of hyperglobalists (orthodox globalists) and transformationists to those of sceptics and anti-globalists. Attention should also be given to the school of globalists who regard the 'global-local' relationship [12, p. 166] as an integrated whole rather than as a simple opposition, as well as to the notion of globalisation as a process that 'suppresses the local' [13]. Nevertheless, despite the polarity of existing views, researchers generally regard globalisation, in one form or another, as an unavoidable paradigm in the development of the world community and examine the position of the state within a world that is undergoing the formation of a new system of global order, with globalisation processes as its principal leitmotif.

Although the state remains a driving and directing force in world politics, it has to some extent lost the capacity to resolve political and economic problems independently and has become more vulnerable to internal threats, terrorism, and crime. At the same time, the importance of non-state organisations, particularly in the economic sphere, has increased. For example, transnational corporations produce approximately one third of global output [14, pp. 109-117; 15, pp. 1-36]. Globalisation and the emergence of a global economy have resulted in a situation in which the welfare of citizens of individual states no longer depends exclusively on

the activities of their governments. Some functions that were previously the prerogative of the state are transferred to non-state and supranational actors in the economy and politics. The economic potential and power of transnational corporations exceed the capacities of many states. Globalisation, together with the growing role of transnational corporations, therefore weakens the state's ability to regulate social and economic relations [16, pp. 81-83].

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, globalisation has radically transformed the world over the past several decades. As a result of the technological, economic, social, and cultural changes associated with it, the conditions under which nation-states function have altered substantially. The former rules governing interaction among states have lost much of their previous relevance. Institutions responsible for ensuring the proper performance of states' internal and external functions no longer demonstrate their former level of effectiveness. An internal restructuring of nation-states has begun and, in some cases, has been accompanied by the complete or partial abandonment of certain functions previously performed by the state, together with a reconsideration of traditional understandings of sovereignty. Concepts have also emerged that seek to justify the possible disappearance of the nation-state as an unnecessary institution within the global world that is currently taking shape.

Today, several particularly urgent tasks facing the nation-state may be identified. The first is to develop new rules necessary for the successful development and functioning of the nation-state under conditions of globalisation, which substantially transforms the environment of interstate relations. The second is to determine the directions of the internal restructuring of the nation-state so that it remains capable of effectively performing its established functions. The third is to define the role of the individual within globalisation processes. It is reasonable to begin addressing these tasks with the third. By intensifying the creation and expansion of social networks, globalisation places the individual at the centre of the transformations taking place.

The conducted research confirms that the rule-of-law state should be understood not merely as a formal constitutional designation but as a

complex social and legal model in which public authority is effectively limited by law and oriented towards the protection of human dignity, rights, and freedoms. Its substantive content is determined by the supremacy of law over political expediency, the priority of fundamental and natural rights, separation of powers, constitutional review, judicial independence, legal certainty, equality before the law, mutual responsibility of the state and the individual, and the availability of effective remedies. Accordingly, the existence of a constitution, legislation, courts, and other institutions is insufficient by itself. Their legitimacy depends on whether they operate consistently, predictably, and in a manner that genuinely protects the individual from arbitrary interference by public authority.

With regard to Ukraine, the analysis demonstrates that the principal difficulty lies in the gap between constitutional declarations and their practical implementation. The consolidation of a democratic rule-of-law state is impeded by institutional weaknesses, corruption, insufficient accountability of public officials, problems of access to justice, pressure on the judiciary and media, legal nihilism, and the persistence of predominantly formal approaches to legality. Overcoming these problems requires not only legislative amendments or the creation of new public institutions, but also a qualitative transformation of legal culture and public administration. A decisive role in this process belongs to civil society, which articulates public interests, exercises oversight over state institutions, protects individuals against arbitrary decisions, and creates social demand for lawful, transparent, and responsible governance. Thus, a sustainable rule-of-law state presupposes an active citizen rather than a passive recipient of state decisions.

European integration provides Ukraine with an important legal and institutional framework for such transformation. Approximation to European democratic and rule-of-law standards should strengthen constitutionalism, public-service orientation, local self-government, protection of human rights, civic participation, and the accountability of public institutions. At the same time, European integration should be combined with the protection of national interests and with the development of a model of statehood that reflects Ukrainian social, cultural, and historical conditions. The effectiveness of reform therefore depends not on the formal reproduction of institutional models, but on their actual implementation,

public acceptance, and ability to improve the quality of relations between the state, society, and the individual.

The study further establishes that globalisation does not eliminate the nation-state, although it significantly transforms the environment in which the state performs its functions. The growing role of supranational institutions, international organisations, transnational corporations, information networks, and other non-state actors changes traditional understandings of sovereignty and reduces the ability of governments to resolve political, economic, social, and security problems in isolation. Nevertheless, the state remains indispensable as a guarantor of stability, security, social protection, public order, and fundamental rights. Under contemporary conditions, its effectiveness increasingly depends on the capacity to cooperate within regional and global networks, develop competent public administration, support science and education, conduct responsible information policy, and respond to new technological, social, and security challenges without abandoning democratic and human-centred principles.

Consequently, the further transformation of the rule-of-law state in Ukraine should be based on the simultaneous strengthening of legal institutions, democratic accountability, civil society, legal culture, and European-oriented governance. The strategic objective is to ensure that the constitutional principle of the rule-of-law state becomes an everyday institutional practice reflected in the conduct of public authorities and in the real experience of citizens. This requires consistent observance of constitutional limits, effective judicial protection, intolerance of corruption and abuse of power, meaningful public participation, respect for political pluralism and freedom of expression, and a stable balance between the interests of the state, civil society, and the individual. Only under these conditions can Ukraine consolidate a resilient democratic legal order capable of preserving sovereignty, responding to global transformations, and maintaining the individual and his or her rights as the central value of public policy.

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