

Klyuchkovych A. Direct democracy in Slovakia: institutional and political aspects of functioning

The main forms, institutional mechanisms and problems of the implementation of direct democracy in Slovak Republic are analyzed in the article. The Constitution establishes the following forms of direct democracy in Slovakia: referendums, petition campaigns and the removal of the President from office (national level); community gathering, local referendum and regional referendum (level of territorial self-government).

The main focus is on the peculiarities of constitutional regulation and the political functioning of the referendum. The referendum is held in Slovak Republic at national, regional and local level. The experience of holding the Slovak referendums testifies to the low turnout of citizens. In 1993-2015, there were eight national referendums, but only one in 2003 was recognized as valid

Key issues, which essentially complicate the procedure of the referendum conducting, have been determined. It is concluded that the referendum institute in Slovak Republic has often been used to achieve narrow political goals. The politicization of the referendum is connected with the political parties, the struggle between the authorities and the opposition.

The article shows the reasons for the lack of interest of citizens in implementing the mechanisms of direct democracy in Slovak Republic.

Development of direct democracy is considered as a key prerequisite for further democratization of Slovakia's political system. The need to improve the legal regulation of direct democracy and referendums in Slovak Republic is also stressed in the article.

Key words: Slovak Republic, direct democracy, referendum, politicization of the referendum, constitutional regulation, political parties.