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Intercultural Communications and Community Participation in Local Governance: EU Experience

Olha Peresada[1]*

Oleksandra Severinova[1]

Vitalii Serohin[2]

Svitlana Serohina[3]

Olga Shutova[3]

[1]Donetsk State University of Internal Affairs of Ukraine,
Velyka Perspektyvna str, 1, Kropyvnytskyi, 25015, Ukraine
[2]V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University,
Svobody Square 4, Kharkiv, 61022, Ukraine
[3]Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University,
Pushkinska Str. 77, Kharkiv, 61024, Ukraine
*Corresponding author

Abstract

This article deals with the identification of the most effective mechanisms, methods and tools for local governance in the EU through a high-level community participation in these processes in the context of building existing systems of intercultural communication. The essence and substance of intercultural communication is revealed with the help of well-known research methods, as well as the logical structure and systemic analysis. The main interdependencies in their implementation on the community structure are determined. The issue of determining the place of local governments in the system of intercultural communications at the territorial community level occupies an important place in the study. The main features of intercultural communication and their impact on community participation in local governance are revealed. An important conclusion is drawn that public demand is the main product of intercultural communication, while social capital is the main result. The relationship between the breadth of community coverage by intercultural communication processes and the depth of community participation in local governance processes is studied. This inclusiveness allows determining the civil society development level, the activity of its institutions, as well as the extent at which the goal of implementing good governance concept in a particular community is achieved. The intercultural communication is proved to be able to form a public demand system that the community presents to local self-government bodies as programme requirements for the state of territorial development. All this determines the further need to study social capital as an independent resource and additional potential that the community can offer through the network of social communications to local self-government bodies to improve the effectiveness of territorial development.

Keywords: intercultural communications, local governance, community, local self-government bodies, good governance

1. Introduction

The current stage of development of European communities is marked by a high-level civic engagement in resolving regional and local issues. The community participation in local governance is no longer reduced to the formation of representative bodies only. In EU countries, territorial communities constitute the potential for territorial development through the unification of civil society and the practical application of the synergistic effect of combining the community's intellectual, human and social capital.

For Ukraine, the fact that the community shapes the public demand for the local authorities to meet urges the development of new forms and mechanisms of territorial community participation in local governance. Therefore, it is the territorial community that must determine the limits and criteria for making decisions of territorial scope. In this context, intercultural communication should be the link between the community needs and its expectations of local government decisions. The main thing is that it shapes the community's perception of the quality of local governance and evaluates management decisions of relevant bodies. Intercultural communication reveals the most acute social contradictions in the community between different social groups, while providing high-quality communication between them (Antipova et al., 2021). Much more effective results in the development of the community, local governance that meets the most pressing needs of its development, or building a model of inclusive management of territorial development can be achieved through understanding the social structure, elitism of the community and the level of its culture, including its separate groups.

The issues of effective use of the communication, intellectual, socio-cultural potential of a territorial community, which it is able to fulfil in order to address local development issues are the most important and poorly studied issues to be settled.

The aim of this study is to identify the most effective mechanisms, methods and tools for local governance in EU countries through a high-level community participation in these processes in the context of building existing systems of intercultural communication.

The aim was achieved through the fulfilment of the following objectives:
study the essence of intercultural communications and their significance for building an effective model of territorial community interaction with local self-government bodies in matters of territorial development;
- identify the features of intercultural communications and their impact on the processes of local community participation in local governance;
- analyse the dependence of local governance models and intercultural communication processes when involving the territorial community in addressing local development issues in the EU countries;
- reveal the main problems of the current state of intercultural communications in the context of community involvement in addressing territorial development issues.

The current state of democratization of public administration and local governance in Ukraine reaches a scale which requires a high-level inclusive participation of civil society for a qualitatively new impetus and introduction of qualitatively new models.

The study of intercultural communications and their impact on community participation in local self-governance is complicated by the lack of clear mathematical models to determine the effectiveness of communication networks. The evolution and logic of the study of this issue has reached the level that requires measuring social capital as one of the potentials for the development of a territory, the activities of local self-government bodies, civil society institutions. This still socio-economic problem has not been addressed so far and remains urgent. Therefore, this study is intended to approach solution of this problem through the understanding of the end product of intercultural communications as a permanent network of social contacts in the community.

2. Literature Review

According to Iheanacho (2016), most European and American researchers consider intercultural communications as a unique ability to enhance inclusive community participation in local

governance. Yang and Wang (2021) provide the mechanism of creating a system of intercultural communications, although they note that this has been the domain of market relations, rather than the political sphere so far. At the same time, Liao et al. (2019) deny this thesis and consider intercultural communications in urban planning. Ahangama and Krishnan (2021) conducted their research in the same area, but the integrity of the system of intercultural communications was a target ultimate goal of community development in their work.

Duquette-Rury (2020) proposes to involve all population groups, including the marginalized populations, in resolving the problem of the development of intercultural communications. At the same time, Riedel and Skrzypiec (2019) note that the coverage of marginalized groups, among others, by intercultural communications, significantly reduces the effectiveness of their political component.

In turn, Cardullo and Kitchin (2018) considered European cities and found that intercultural communications contributed to the development of smart urbanism, smart citizenship, good governance concepts. They stated that the community can be involved in management decision-making processes in the local government system by activating communication networks, which in turn significantly improves the quality of this system. These researchers explicitly note that this is one of the ways to implement democratic processes, which must evolve, because a new neoliberal logic of citizen-oriented smart cities in Europe needs it.

By the way, Mäkinen (2020) notes that in his research. Cockburn (2014) proves the appropriateness of the idea of enhancing community participation in local development issues by providing historical examples. García (2018) is also an active supporter of a participatory model of local self-government, which is impossible without an intensive involvement of local communities in the territorial development processes. He emphasizes the need for broad involvement of all social groups without exception to determine the development needs of the territory. Similarly, Stein (2017) reveals the value of intercultural communications through more effective territorial development planning.

Adams and Ramsden (2019) focus on the issue of smart urbanism and inclusive civil society which is actively involved in the political decision-making process at the local level in the study and determining the level of democratization of society. The central subject of the research conducted by Bauwens et al. (2019), as well as some other researches was the results of intercultural communications at the community level and their impact on shaping the political context of local government. Kral (2018) further developed the researchers' opinion, stating that such communications are a kind of plane in which local self-government bodies are able to determine effectiveness of their decisions on community development issues, and how the community responds to them.

It should be noted that many Ukrainian authors studied the impact of intercultural communications on the community participation in local governance, but they mainly interpreted the results of research conducted by American and European researchers. In her works, Halytska (2014) considered intercultural communications as a means of assessing the stability of personal ties in a particular social group. Shevchenko (2020) holds that intercultural communications are one of the practical manifestations of the peculiarities of the territorial community's legal status. Zhovnirchyk and Melnyk (2015) advanced the thesis that intercultural communication is a kind of tool for innovative development of territorial communities, as well as a leverage on local self-government bodies.

Ustymenko and Zablodska (2018) regard intercultural communications as a tool to involve the public in the local self-governance. At the same time, Serhiienko (2016) considers intercultural communication as a product of external political influence on the territorial community. In contrast, Karyi and Panas (2015) argue that intercultural communications are a practical implementation of the forms of direct democracy by the territorial community. In general, the issues of intercultural communications are not quantified in the works of Ukrainian scholars, unlike European scholars.

The works of Teles (2012) are much more progressive in terms of our study of the impact of intercultural communications on the development of local government. He links them with the form of local government and social capital. For Van Hulst and Yanow (2016), intercultural communication is a practical implementation of the theoretical background of the direct democracy model.

At the same time, Arboleda (2022) links intercultural communications with the emergence of

social capital, its further use by local self-government bodies themselves as one of the most important potentials. Markiewicz (2021) comes to the same conclusion: he considers social capital as the product of the evolutionary development of political processes at the community level.

It thus appears that there are a number of poorly studied issues:
- how intercultural communication can affect the quality of local governance implementation by the community itself through direct democracy among other tools;
- what is the value of social capital for local government, what is its importance for the activities of local self-government bodies, and how it can be turned into an important resource for this purpose.

In view of the foregoing, we will examine the nature of intercultural communications, their effectiveness for local governance, their impact on relevant bodies on the one hand. On the other hand, we will identify the opportunities and ways to effectively use human, intellectual and most importantly social capital as a result of intercultural communications.

3. Methods

The first stage of the study involved the analysis, systematization and identification of the main approaches to understanding the nature and mechanisms of intercultural communications on the example of Eastern and Western European countries. It was necessary to determine how intercultural communications are created, who joins them and how this determines the effectiveness of their implementation and the productivity of local self-government. Unfortunately, the lack of quantitative data that indicate the effectiveness of intercultural communications complicates the mathematical expression of the results obtained. Instead, we set the aim to identify the structural links between the various components of the intercultural communications structure, and to determine the place of local self-government bodies in these links.

The scope of the research extended to the European communities, which are divided according to the socio-political perception of democratic values by the majority of researchers. The countries and communities of Eastern (post-Soviet, post-communist) Europe and Western (traditionally democratic) Europe are clearly distinguished. As regards the structure of the community itself, we focused primarily on all its elements and social groups. Although there is a standpoint of the need to unify the community at the level of each individual, we believe that it is more correct to study the relationships between social groups — from elites to marginalized groups. This will provide an understanding of the diversity of real community development needs, and will allow identifying the problems of local governance.

In addition to well-known methods, we actively used the logical structure analysis to determine the peculiarities of intercultural communications depending on the local governance model. We identified the structure and mechanism of building intercultural communications, as well as the degree of involvement of the territorial community in intercultural communications. At the same time, we established the relationship between the results of intercultural communications and the degree of community involvement in local governance.

Systemic analysis was the most important for the study, as it allowed to answer such essential questions as: "What is the product of intercultural communications at the community level?" and "How does this product affect the quality of local governance and local development?" So, we attempt to attach practical significance to intercultural communications and to make their impact on local governance processes more practically measurable. This, in turn, will bring us closer to the main goal — identifying the areas and tools to make the exercise of community's right to local self-government more effective.

4. Results

The European Community is characterized by a high level of development of horizontally integrated civil society, which actively influences the socio-political processes of most EU member states. Horizontal integration implies that the processes of shaping public opinion, forming civic needs, public

demand involve almost all population groups. The dominance of the civic concept of regional development has demonstrated the success and efficiency of the most independent local governments. The independence reveals itself not only through the delegation of a wide range of powers from public authorities, but also through the appropriate resources for the exercise of powers. The level of coordination of efforts and cooperation of resources of civil society and territorial authorities, which traditionally takes the form of local self-government, determine the effectiveness of exercising powers.

So, the effective implementation of territorial development requires that the bodies in charge — mainly local self-government bodies — must clearly understand the community's needs, identify priorities for its development with due regard to the peculiarities of its composition and political expectations. This condition cannot be dispensed with to achieve sustainable development goals and ensure good governance, as the latter reflects the perception of society and community of the quality of administration and administrative services provided by the authorities.

There is a need to involve the community in the territorial development management processes, because the latter can enrich the resources of local government, create new potentials and reserves by fulfilling its intellectual, social and human capital. But the community is not a universal one-type monostructural entity. It is a complex organism, a system of many elements (social segments and groups), which quite often exist and develop in different social strata and planes. Intercultural communication is a link through which the community exists as a single social organism.

We found that intercultural communications in the most general form can be defined as a complex system of communication channels, noise sources and ways to overcome it, which combines different segments, cultural groups, its individuals and deviant and/or marginal elements. The stability of communication channels, the intensity of noise sources and the effectiveness of tools to overcome it determine the degree of consolidation of such a society around the development ideologues which are the most common for its representatives.

We come to understand that there are two points of view as to whether local self-government bodies should be elements of intercultural communication or they should act as external communicators in relation to this system (Figure 1).
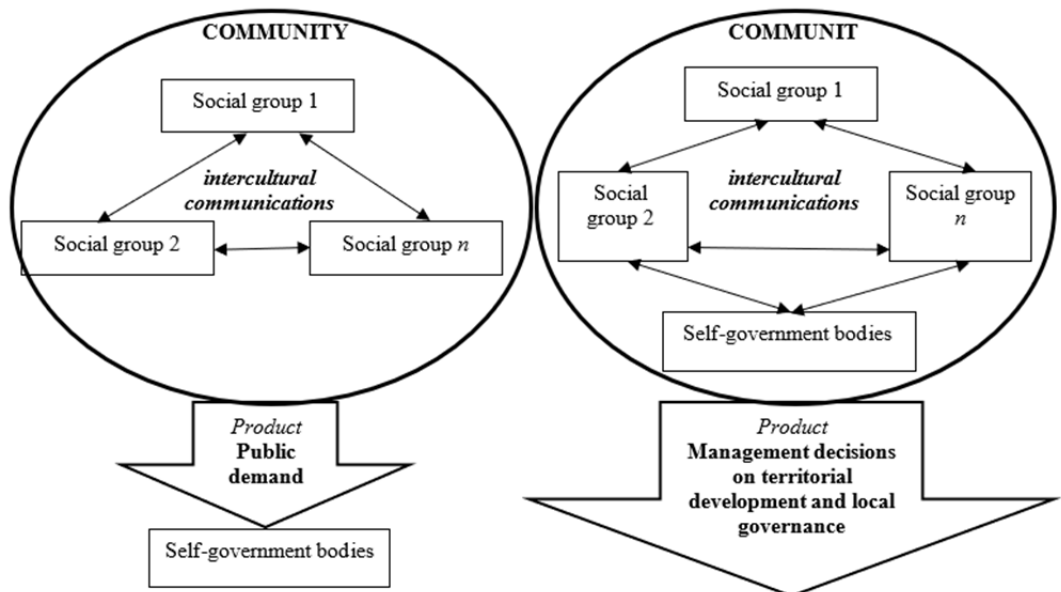

Figure 1: The place of local self-government bodies in the system of intercultural communications at the territorial community level

In the first case, where local self-government bodies are part of the intercultural communication system, they are an independent layer, an element of interaction with other structural elements of society — the territorial community in this case. On the one hand, it greatly simplifies communication between them and the community because of no need for feedback. Being part of the intercultural communication system, local self-government bodies bring the limitations and conditions in which the community can exist into this system through their communication channels.

So, being involved in the communication processes of the community, local self-government bodies are not only recipients of information about public needs, expectations of civil society or a subject of control by the civil society institutions. Local self-government bodies correct communications, they act as additional filters of noise (communication errors, irrelevant information, misinformation, etc.), creating a more transparent environment for local governance.

In the other case, when local self-government bodies are third-party communicators for the system of intercultural communication, they act as centres for civil control, public demand, and community expectations from the implementation of management decisions on territorial development. We can say that local self-government bodies act as consumers or transformers of the product of the community's intercultural communication. This product is a public demand, a vision of community development, expectations (often quantified) of socio-economic development of the community. In this model of intercultural communications, the public demand formed in the community is a landmark of territorial development for local self-government bodies, as well as the factor influencing the development goals to be determined.

Understanding of what a public demand is, and it is not the only one, as intercultural communications are constantly taking place in the community, is a reaction to the activities of local self-government bodies, on the one hand. On the other hand, it is the anticipation of a new qualitative stage of development, local government is becoming an inclusive system in which civil society shares responsibility for the state of territorial development. This responsibility implies that the civil society institutions, upon processing of the results of intercultural communications, are the drivers of their implementation in the practice of local self-government bodies. In most European countries, this process reveals through different self-government models: public hearings, public initiatives, petitions, etc. Seeking certain changes identified as a public demand, civil society must take a number of measures to implement such changes, as local self-government bodies cannot cover all spheres of community life due to limited own resources.

The main reason is that an intercultural partnership that comprises the contribution of all community members and reflects the full participation of local elites, civil society institutions and individual representatives promotes new ways of interaction between local citizens and local self-government bodies. This interactive process "intertwines" public authorities and society into the concept of local governance. Horizontal links in the community between all its social groups and structural elements, and vertical links with local authorities provide a better understanding of the socio-political reality of the community, its needs, and the resultant more effective governance.

A number of factors that determine the stability of intercultural communications are important for this purpose:
- the size of the community and its socio-economic security;
- the duration of the established structure and composition of the community at a particular time;
- the polarity between different social groups, in particular gaps between marginalized groups and local elites;
- intensity of socio-political processes in the community (alteration of heads and staff of local self-government bodies; social stability/instability, etc.).

It is objective to say that the more stable and socially closed a community is, the more effective intercultural communication and the more inclusive its participation in the socio-political processes of territorial development. Lack or minimal impact of migration processes, social stratification, a

balance of elites are the factors that affect the stability of the results of effective community development and good governance standards. However, the current conditions of socio-economic development of the EU and mainly migration processes, the war in Ukraine entail constant migration processes, redistribution of local resources. Therefore, effective intercultural communication requires coordination of the communication channels and connections, which is entirely the responsibility of civil society institutions.

The peculiarities and nature of intercultural communications depend on the level of development of civil society, the ability of its institutions to integrate into the community and become a link between all structural elements. They also depend on the peculiarities of the local self-government model that exists in a particular EU member state.

In general, there are three types of local government in Europe. As regards the UK, which is a classic representative of the so-called Anglo-Saxon model, some features of this model are common in such countries as Ireland and Denmark, although it withdrew from the EU (Table 1).

Table 1: Features of intercultural communications and their impact on the participation of local communities in local governance

Local government model	Countries that use it	Features of intercultural communications and their impact on local governance
Anglo-Saxon	Great Britain (not a EU member), partly: Ireland, Denmark	High-level community autonomy in the local governance processes: manifested through direct control, forms of direct democracy and participation in the management of territorial development. Intercultural communications are realized in all available forms of social ties, their high density and inclusion of even the most marginalized populations
Romano-Germanic (continental)	Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, France	Existence of public authorities at the territorial and regional level, which creates a system of delegation of powers to the local government level. Intercultural communications take place in two vectors: local — affect only the local self-government bodies; national — the community is a structural element of the national communications system. The development of civil society reveals itself through a clear system of relevant institutions that represent the community's interests. This means that intercultural communications create opportunities for delegating much of the control, monitoring and representation functions by the community to such institutions. This reduces the activity of marginalized and deviant population groups.
Mixed	Germany, Austria, Hungary, Sweden	Intercultural communications mostly do not include marginalized groups whose interests are represented by civil society institutions and non-profit NGOs. Local elites often nominate their participation in intercultural communications, replacing the influence on local self-government bodies through lobby groups.

So, we conclude that the following factors affect the quality and structure of intercultural communications, and therefore their end product — the public demand for ways for community and territory develop:

- the local government model, which determines the level of inclusiveness and the ability of the community to influence socio-political processes to address territorial development issues;
- development of democratic processes, which affects the set of tools for community participation in the management of territorial development. The matter is about the development of forms of direct democracy and the exercise of control over representative bodies or positions in the local government system;
- coverage of all population segments and groups of the community by intercultural communications, which gives a broader picture of the real socio-economic needs of the local community.

The last thesis allows reflecting the following relationship between the community structure, the level of its inclusion in the intercultural communication processes, and the way or even the quality of territorial development or depth of participation in local governance (Figure 2).
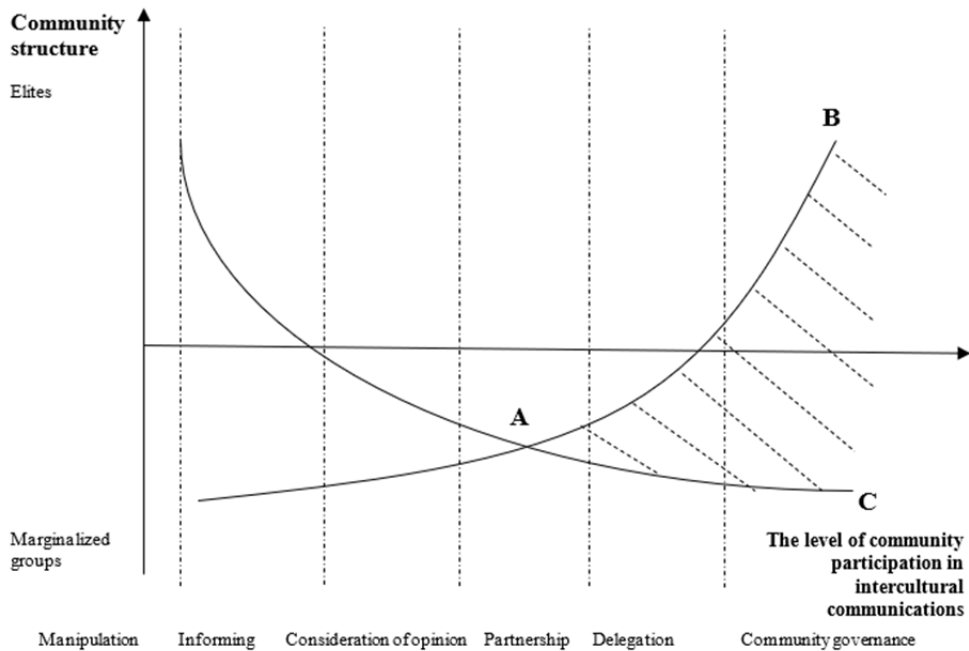
Figure 2: The relationship between the breadth of community involvement in intercultural communication processes and the depth of community participation in local governance

We see that intercultural communications in a marginalized community are ineffective in shaping public demand. The reason is that the worldview of a marginalized community is objectively limited and distorted in terms of a high level of legal awareness, civil society values and democratic processes. Similarly, if intercultural communications take place without the participation of marginalized populations through community elites only, the local governance is developed in the interests of those elites only. This does not fully meet or coincide with the interests of the middle class, which forms civil society.

In general, the diversity of society encourages each individual for constructive interaction within the community, as described by the ABC figure on the. The local initiative (LI) curve describes the level of involvement of different population segments in the intercultural communication processes. In turn, the curve ICS (intercultural communication sharing) shows the intensification of activity and initiative of the whole society in the local governance. In our opinion, the obtained figure describes the dependence on the level of coverage of the whole community by intercultural communications and the level of inclusion of different population segments and groups of the community in the local governance. Its contours indicate the achievement of the goal of the socio-political concept of good governance by the community's local self-government bodies.

We can speak about a high level of intercultural communications and broad coverage of all social groups when we achieve a partnership or mutual delegation of authority between the community and local self-government bodies. The latter is considered a high level of public participation in the territorial development management and in the activities of local self-government bodies. This means a certain quality of those intercultural communications, as well as the community's ability to transform the resulting effects into the final product that the local self-government body understands — public demand about the vision of community development. Local

self-government bodies cannot independently determine the priorities of community development, as the social structure of the latter is constantly transformed in a changing environment.

They local self-government bodies must clearly understand the needs of the community to direct the main resources in order to achieve the maximum result of territorial management. This is impossible without constant participation in the process of communication with the community. Therefore, it is provided through the civil society institutions, which is the achievement of the state of so-called public administration on our chart. This level of community participation in local governance is characterized by three important aspects:

- there is a consolidation of human, intellectual and social capital of the community, which can and should be used to improve the quality of local governance;
- the coverage of intercultural communications is so dense that it allows to create a complete accurate picture of the needs of all population segments and groups within the community;
- the community has ample opportunities for direct access to local development management through various forms of direct democracy and civil society institutions.

In this case, local self-government bodies receive additional resources consolidated in the community to meet its needs. Besides, the self-government bodies get additional administrative capacity as they are able to delegate some of their powers to the community level to address the most pressing and urgent needs of territorial development.

The experience of Sweden and Denmark is indicative, in particular, due to the low level of government intervention in providing the needs of search and rescue operations, medical and other support provided through Falk — the public service. On the other hand, the experience of Germany and Austria, and partly France, shows that the exclusion of marginalized populations from the general system of intercultural communications entails steadily increasing social tensions in depressed regions and regions where such marginalized groups (migrants, refugees, national minorities) live. This turns such groups into independent closed systems, which are in fact excluded from access to public governance of territorial development. At the same time, their needs remain only declaration of readiness of local self-government bodies and are often not met in full. The experience of Italy is equally indicative, where even a single nation cannot form intercultural communications of the proper quality and breadth because of mental diversity, which leads to constant political crises.

So, the current trend is the thesis that intercultural communications are able to formulate a system of public demands that the community presents to the local self-government bodies as programme requirements for the state of territorial development. Therefore, the inclusion of different population groups of the community in intercultural communications makes both the public demands clearer, and improves the understanding needs of community development by local self-government bodies. As a result, this simplifies the achievement of territorial development goals while consolidating much more resources using the potential of civil society.

5. Discussion

Speaking about the utility of the results of this study for Ukraine, we should pay due attention to the results of research conducted by Shevchenko (2020). He notes that the success of intercultural communications and the degree of community involvement in the territorial development management directly depend on the structure of the community itself. According to Shevchenko (2020), "territorial community is a complex form of social organization, a set of local residents united within a certain territory. This constitutes a certain legal model of self-organization of the population with governing entities established in order to implement and protect local public and private interests." We can see that the researcher considers it necessary not to single out any social groups within the community, but individualizes and unifies its composition. According to Serhiienko (2016), this "allows minimizing social and political risks, on the one hand, and identifying, formulating and defending the community's interests, on the other."

That is, according to Ukrainian scholars, the lack of stratification of the community and the use of individual, instead of group methods of assessing public opinion (personal surveys, petitions, etc.) will provide much more accurate information about the real needs of the community, and can form a more relevant public demand. Halytska (2014) has the same point of view. In turn, Zhovnirchyk and Melnyk (2015) explain the importance of individualizing the needs of citizens in the local community by the large potential social gaps and stratification. The latter factors hinder the political or social activity of some citizens because they do not belong to any social group.

In practice, these theses are confirmed by studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Ustymenko & Zablodska, 2018) and the Association of Ukrainian Cities (Karyi & Panas, 2015). We emphasize that we do not agree with this view, believing that intercultural communication best reveals the community needs only when it is built between different groups and segments of the community, and not just between the individuals. First, not all members of the community have the necessary level of activity to participate in such individual communications. Second, it is much more difficult to identify the most pressing and important problems of territorial development in this way because the results will not have the necessary dispersion.

We can refer to the work of Wollenschläger (2017) to support our position. He noted that the community is involved in local governance through civil society institutions, not through individuals. Iheanacho (2016) speaks about the importance of building an intercultural communications system to enhance community involvement in solving territorial development problems. According to the researcher, intercultural communication is a condition for the fulfilment of the community's social potential in a pluralistic society and global communication. Nguyen-Phuong-Mai (2017) emphasizes that intercultural communications are able to ensure the maximum involvement of social networks within any society in order to direct their potential to meet the development needs of that society.

But Markiewicz (2021) draws a different conclusion on the basis of the analysis of John Connelly's work. He believes that intercultural communication served not so much the goals of the development of communities and local self-government as the task of consolidating political blocs and empires. He proves this on the example of the history of Eastern Europe during the Cold War. Most researchers agree that intercultural communication is a means of shaping a consolidated position of civil society. They argue that the greater the level of democratization of society, the more effective intercultural communication (Yang & Wang, 2021; Medina-Guce, 2020).

Further we support our proposed thesis that intercultural communication in territorial communities leads to the consolidation of social capital and its use as one of the of territorial development potentials. The synergistic effect of communication within the community will lead to greater political participation, as the community joins the socio-political everyday life, addressing issues that directly affect its life. In other words, as Duquette-Rury (2020) explains, greater participation in intercultural communications increases political efficiency and socio-political mobilization of the community.

The example of EU countries is the most illustrative in this context, as these countries have a well-established tradition of involving civil society institutions by local authorities in the local policy-making. In particular, Riedel and Skrzypiec (2019) drew such a conclusion on the example of Poland, the Czech Republic and other Eastern European countries. At the same time, there is another view expressed by Bauwens et al. (2019) that intercultural communications do not create social capital, but only community-generated social capital is capable of generating highly effective social communications and thus building an effective civil society.

Social capital is supposed to mean a determinant and, at the same time, a consequence of an effective model of local self-government. Its existence is necessary for the proper functioning of the interdependent network model of collective intercultural communications. The key idea of social capital, as Teles (2012) notes, is that social networks (intercultural communications) are important for local self-government, emphasizing the level of community integration into political processes. However, the European Communities consider this level of integration, which can be described as civil society, as an integral part of a current local governance model (Semianovskyi, 2019).

That is why European and foreign researchers do not dispute the need for their implementation and integration in relation to the study of intercultural communication processes in the EU (Liao et al., 2019). Cardullo and Kitchin (2018) only raise the issues of their measurement, the measurement of the potential that local governments can receive from the integration. However, the measurement is most often reduced to expert evaluation, questionnaires or other methods of sociological research (Mäkinen, 2020). And only in some cases such a measurement emerges in the evolution of the need for its clear determination on the wat to the formation of the social capital category and its (quantitative) evaluation (Van Hulst & Yanow, 2016).

In fact, the experience of European countries in building intercultural communications and their impact on local governance is studied mainly in terms of civil society development (Council of Europe, 2015). The issue of the relationship of intercultural communications with the level of community participation in socio-political processes at the territorial level is considered only through studies of community inclusion (measuring the intensity and diversity of forms of direct democracy) (García, 2018; Kral, 2018). In fact, researchers indicate that in the EU, as in all democracies, the level of involvement of the territorial community in the local governance through intercultural communications is not a product of the evolution of the community itself. It is the result of the development of the mechanism of a democratic state. That is, local authorities, by encouraging the community to engage in intercultural communications, create additional potential for community development for themselves [for local self-government bodies], thus generating social capital through communication networks.

In this regard, some researchers, such as Arboleda (2022) and others note that by intensifying intercultural communications local authorities will get the necessary expanded understanding of alternatives to territorial development or ways to make the existing capacity more efficient. At the same time, Stein (2017) believes that intercultural communications are not so much a potential for community development as an additional source of information support for local self-government bodies. In the works of Adams and Ramsden (2019), this thesis is realized in the conclusion that intercultural communications produce a certain public demand, which is a driver of community development and a teaser for local self-government bodies regarding the expectations of the population for particular policy decisions to be adopted by the authorities.

6. Conclusions

We have found that it is difficult to quantify public participation in the local self-governance through the mechanism of intercultural communications in particular indicators. The rhetoric of politicians, heads of local self-government bodies often emphasizes the importance of citizen participation in local development, while in practice they reduce such participation only to consultation between decision-makers and the community. That is why we consider the development of intercultural communications to be one of the key areas of improving the quality of community participation, the intensity of its involvement in local governance.

The potential of intercultural communications is an important element in activating civil society, in fact its structural background. We have proved that public demand is the main product of intercultural communications, which is formed when determining the most important needs of the community and society. The public demand serves as a guide for local self-government bodies in the implementation of territorial development goals. At the same time, when the demand receives a response from local self-government bodies and met by them, we are talking about achieving local governance goals and achieving the desired state of development of the concept of socio-political format towards good governance. But intercultural communications open up new opportunities for community involvement in local governance in the course of their emergence and formation. This is manifested through the community participation mechanism with the help of various forms of direct democracy.

In turn, this activates civil society, makes it more dynamic, efficient and inclusive in the

decision-making by local self-government bodies. And most importantly, the social capital of the community is generated through intercultural communications in the course of their formation and functioning. Social capital is the main result of the impact of intercultural communications on local governance with the active participation of civil society. In our opinion, social capital is the most essential and important resource for local self-government bodies in the context of achieving local development goals.

In further research, we will focus on the structure and mechanisms of fulfilling the potential of social capital and methods to measure it, as well as the tools to use it as an additional resource potential of local self-government bodies.

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