

**SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL MECHANISMS AND PROSPECTS FOR
ORGANIZING LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE POWER ON THE BASIS
OF THE PRINCIPLE OF “SERVING THE INTERESTS
OF THE POPULATION”**

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Abstract: The article analyses the philosophical content of the principle of “serving the interests of the population” and the conceptual foundations for preventing “social dependency”. It examines the philosophical essence of the concept of “interest”, the concept of active citizenship, institutional trust and social justice as factors for improving the human-centred model of local representative authorities.

Key words: interests of the population, social dependency, active citizenship, institutional trust, social justice, local representative authorities.

Introduction: Philosophically, the principle of “serving the interests of the population” is interpreted as an idea that places the human being — with his or her needs, dignity, and social wellbeing — at the centre of the relationship between the state and society. The content of this principle has been shaped at the intersection of classical and contemporary socio-political thought, with the recognition of the human being as an end in itself standing at its core. Serving the interests of the people is understood not merely as providing social assistance or distributing resources, but as creating conditions for citizens to realize their potential, ensuring their active participation, and establishing social justice and equality. From this perspective, the principal task of local representative power consists in recognizing the interests of the various strata of the population, coordinating them, and expressing them in institutional form.

This process also requires a philosophical analysis of the concept of “interest” itself. Interest is the unity of a person’s objective needs and subjective aspirations, manifested within the system of social relations. At the local level, these interests are most often expressed in spheres such as economic wellbeing, social infrastructure, education, healthcare, and environmental security. At the same time, cases of misinterpreting the principle of “serving the interests of the population” also occur. In some instances, this principle is understood merely as expanding social assistance or as the state satisfying all needs, which leads to a strengthening of the mood of “social dependency”. Social dependency is a condition in which an individual or social group shifts full responsibility for their own life onto the state or other

institutions, abandoning an active social position. Philosophically, this condition is linked to a disruption of the balance between human freedom and responsibility.

As President Sh. Mirziyoyev has emphasized, “We are making every decision concerning the life of the country in consultation with our people, on the basis of direct dialogue. The idea that ‘the people should not serve government offices — government offices should serve our people’ is becoming the criterion of our activities in this regard” [1, 2017].

To prevent social dependency within the local governance system, it is necessary to rely on the concept of “active citizenship”. Active citizenship is characterized by a person’s readiness to participate in the life of society, awareness of their own interests, and the defence of those interests through lawful means. Here, the task of the state is not to turn citizens into ready-made “consumers”, but to shape them as social subjects. Contemporary socio-philosophical theories are of considerable importance in this respect.

The President has also noted that “our Basic Law establishes the norm that ‘the state expresses the will of the people and serves their interests’” [2, 2023].

Although the concept of the social state recognizes the state’s responsibility toward the population, it is emphasized that this responsibility must be harmonized with the encouragement of citizens’ personal initiative and labour activity. In this regard, the social policy carried out by local representative bodies must ensure a harmony between the mechanisms of “support” and “encouragement”. In practice, this can be observed through the following examples. In some regions, where social assistance programmes have been limited solely to material aid, a spirit of dependency on the state has taken shape among the population. Conversely, in regions where measures such as vocational training, support for small business, and the provision of microcredit have been implemented, the economic activity of the population has increased and social wellbeing has been ensured in a sustainable manner. This demonstrates that the correct interpretation of the principle of “serving the interests of the population” is realized precisely through increasing human activity.

From a philosophical standpoint, preventing social dependency is linked to restoring human dignity and turning the individual into an active participant in social processes. This, in turn, is achieved through education, upbringing, culture, and information policy. At the local level, this process is supported through the mahalla institution, public organizations, and civil society institutions. This approach to state–society relations requires new institutional mechanisms in the process of transformation. In particular, factors such as taking public opinion into account, strengthening public oversight, and ensuring openness and transparency in decision-making are of great importance. These mechanisms serve not only to protect the interests of the population but also to shape and develop them.

Main Part The effectiveness of local representative power largely depends on the degree of its dialogue with the population. If these bodies are able to identify the population's real needs and pursue policies appropriate to them, social trust increases. Otherwise, formal decisions and top-down programmes fail to produce results, and discontent among the population grows. From this perspective, the category of social justice occupies a central place in implementing the principle of "serving the interests of the population". Social justice is manifested through the distribution of resources, equality of opportunity, and legal guarantees. Ensuring this principle at the local level strengthens the population's trust in the state and secures social stability. Preventing social dependency, in turn, is closely linked to shaping precisely this just system. If a society upholds the principles of rewarding according to labour, equality of opportunity, and personal responsibility, there remains no social basis for dependency. Otherwise, conditions of inequality and injustice push citizens toward passivity.

In this process, particular importance attaches to increasing human social activity and responsibility. This is because implementing the principle of "serving the interests of the population" requires not only action by the state but also the participation of citizens themselves as social subjects. From the standpoint of social philosophy, the sustainable development of society rests on relations of mutual responsibility and cooperation between the state and citizens. These relations are manifested not as one-sided giving or receiving of aid, but as mutual influence and partnership. Institutional conditions must be created within the system of local representative power for the formation of such partnership relations.

Mechanisms such as public hearings, open dialogue platforms, and citizens' assemblies enable the population to express its views directly. Such mechanisms turn the population not merely into subjects who receive decisions, but into participants who help shape them. This serves as an effective tool against social dependency. The formation of social dependency is, in many cases, linked to economic and moral factors. Economically, unemployment, poverty, and limited opportunities make citizens dependent on state assistance. Morally, factors such as lack of initiative, avoidance of responsibility, and social passivity intensify this process. For this reason, addressing this problem requires a comprehensive approach.

As President Sh. Mirziyoyev has emphasized, "The success of the reforms we are carrying out depends, first of all, on the level of maturity of political parties, and on the extent to which they are ready to take upon themselves the responsibility before our dear Motherland" [3, 2019]. He also stated: "Most importantly, political competition among parties must serve the interests of our people, not the pursuit of false prestige. We must never forget this truth" [3, 2019].

Practical experience in certain countries shows that social assistance programmes yield more effective results when they are "conditional" in character.

Alongside material assistance, certain conditions are required of recipients: enrolling children in education, participating in labour activity, and improving professional qualifications, among others. This approach encourages citizens toward activity and fosters in them a sense of responsibility. Introducing such mechanisms at the local level enhances the population's capacity for self-governance. In particular, within the framework of the mahalla institution, it is important to support citizens' social initiatives, implement collective projects, and develop traditions of voluntary labour. Through this, the population is formed not merely as a recipient of social assistance, but as a subject contributing to the development of society.

From a socio-philosophical standpoint, the principle of "serving the interests of the population" requires a harmony of humanism and pragmatism. While humanism is directed toward satisfying the population's needs, pragmatism serves to ensure the effectiveness of this process. If humanism alone predominates, the risk of dependency arises; if pragmatism alone predominates, social justice may be violated. It is therefore important to maintain a balance between these two approaches.

Strategic planning is of great importance for maintaining this balance in the activities of local representative power. That is, short-term social assistance measures must be harmonized with a long-term development strategy. Alongside temporary material assistance, measures must be implemented to provide employment for the population, develop entrepreneurship, and improve education and healthcare. Information policy also plays an important role in this regard. If the population is provided with accurate and open information about the essence, goals, and outcomes of state policy, their trust increases and their social activity strengthens. Otherwise, inaccurate information and misunderstandings may intensify social passivity and dependency.

The role of the education system in this process is invaluable. Through education, citizens develop qualities such as critical thinking, independent decision-making, and social responsibility, which lay the foundation for their active participation in the life of society. From this perspective, the education system is a strategic resource for implementing the principle of "serving the interests of the population". Under the conditions of the transformation of local representative power, implementing this principle requires new approaches. In particular, measures such as the use of digital technologies, the introduction of electronic governance systems, and the strengthening of interactive dialogue with the population are of importance. Through these measures, the decision-making process is accelerated, transparency is increased, and the participation of the population is expanded.

Cultural factors are also important in preventing social dependency. If values such as respect for labour, initiative, and self-development prevail in society, citizens do not become entirely dependent on the state. It is therefore important to promote these values through cultural policy. Legal mechanisms also play a significant role.

When the rights and obligations of citizens are clearly defined in legislation, their social activity increases. Alongside the right to work, an obligation to work may also be established, and certain conditions may be attached to receiving social assistance. This serves to prevent dependency.

Developing mechanisms of social partnership at the local level is also of great importance. Cooperation among the state, the private sector, and civil society institutions makes it possible to resolve social problems effectively. This, too, is a practical expression of the principle of “serving the interests of the population”.

The deepening of social partnership relations elevates the activity of local representative power to a new qualitative stage. In this process, the state institution is manifested not as a sole ruling subject, but as a coordinating and encouraging mechanism among various social forces. The principle of serving the population’s interests finds its most effective expression precisely within such a multi-subject governance model, since various groups within society — entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations, civic initiatives, and ordinary citizens — gain the opportunity to freely express and realize their own interests. Socio-philosophical analysis shows that the concept of “interest” is not static but dynamic in character — that is, it changes over time and is reshaped under new social conditions. From this perspective, local representative power must continuously study the needs and aspirations of the population. For this purpose, it is important to use methods such as sociological research, social monitoring, and the collection of opinions through digital platforms.

As practical examples, mechanisms such as “open budget” and “citizens’ initiative” may be cited for identifying the population’s problems. Within such systems, citizens submit proposals on how local budget funds should be spent and determine priority directions through voting. This increases the population’s activity and fosters in them a sense of responsibility toward public property. Through this, a culture of social partnership develops rather than social dependency. Another important aspect of social dependency lies in its psychological foundations. Attitudes of passivity, distrust, and the belief that “nothing will change because of me” alienate citizens from social processes. To overcome this, it is important to strengthen the population’s confidence in their own abilities and to encourage them through small achievements. Direct participation of the population in small-scale infrastructure projects implemented at the local level fosters positive experience and trust.

Philosophically, this process is referred to as “subjectivation” — that is, the individual becomes an active participant in social relations and emerges as a subject capable of influencing his or her own life and the development of society. The principle of serving the population’s interests must support precisely this process of subjectivation. Economic reforms are also of decisive importance in implementing this principle. If the local economy is developed, there are sufficient jobs, and a

favourable environment for entrepreneurship has been created, the population's need for dependency decreases. Local representative bodies must therefore actively pursue economic policy, attract investment, and pay particular attention to supporting small and medium-sized businesses. A differentiated approach is also important in ensuring social justice — that is, different policies should be pursued for different strata of the population. Support measures should be strengthened for socially vulnerable groups, while encouraging mechanisms should take priority for the working-age population. This approach increases the effectiveness of social policy and prevents dependency.

From a cultural-axiological standpoint, the system of values within society plays an important role. If values such as labour, knowledge, initiative, and responsibility prevail in society, citizens take responsibility for their own lives upon themselves. Otherwise, attitudes favouring an easy path and reliance on ready-made resources come to dominate. It is therefore necessary to shape positive values through moral and educational work. Personnel policy in local representative power is also of decisive importance. If leaders and deputies deeply understand the interests of the population and possess a culture of dialogue with them, policy becomes effective. Otherwise, formal approaches prevail, and a rift arises between the population and the authorities. For this reason, particular attention must be paid to socio-philosophical knowledge in the training and retraining of personnel. Under contemporary conditions, digital transformation is also emerging as an important factor. Electronic government, online services, and digital platforms are expanding the opportunities for dialogue with the population. This increases the population's participation in decision-making and ensures transparency. At the same time, digital technologies strengthen social oversight and help prevent corruption.

The family institution also plays a significant role in preventing social dependency. Within the family, qualities such as diligence, responsibility, and independence are cultivated. If these values are firmly established, the individual becomes socially active. From this perspective, strengthening family policy is also of great importance in implementing this principle.

Reforms carried out at the local level must be coherent and systemic in character — that is, measures in the economic, social, legal, and cultural spheres must be implemented in interconnection with one another. Only under such conditions does the principle of “serving the interests of the population” acquire real substance, and a sustainable immunity against social dependency is formed. The prospects of this approach are broad, since, under conditions of globalization and digitalization, the sustainable development of society increasingly depends precisely on human capital — its activity and creative potential. For this reason, orienting the activity of local representative power toward the human being, while ensuring their interests and increasing their activity, is of strategic importance.

Within a development model based on human capital, the principle of “serving the interests of the population” is not merely a means of social protection but becomes a strategic factor driving development. Here, the main focus is directed toward increasing people’s knowledge, skills, potential, and social activity. Local representative power must act as the institution coordinating and encouraging this process. Under such an approach, the substance of social policy also changes: it is no longer limited to reducing poverty or ensuring social protection, but is directed toward expanding the population’s economic and social opportunities. Measures such as improving the quality and coverage of education, developing vocational training centres, and supporting innovative activity increase the population’s opportunities for independent income generation. This, in turn, naturally leads to a reduction in social dependency. At the same time, the development of social infrastructure is also of great importance. The quality of roads, transport, water supply, healthcare, and educational institutions directly affects the population’s standard of living. If these sectors are sufficiently developed, citizens have the opportunity to realize their potential effectively. Otherwise, even large-scale social assistance programmes fail to produce sustainable results.

The question of maintaining a balance between social justice and effectiveness requires deeper philosophical analysis. While the principle of justice envisages creating equal opportunities for all citizens, effectiveness requires the rational use of resources. Local representative power must pursue policy that harmonizes these two principles. For this purpose, it is important to use data-driven decision-making, as well as methods of analysis and forecasting. In the struggle against social dependency, the concept of “self-reliance” occupies a distinct place. According to this concept, each individual assumes primary responsibility for their own life, while the state creates the necessary conditions for them. This approach ensures a balance between human freedom and responsibility. If freedom alone predominates, social inequality may intensify; if state responsibility alone predominates, dependency develops. It is therefore important to harmonize these two factors.

As President Sh. M. Mirziyoyev has emphasized, “Every deputy must be capable of acting as a specialist in the relevant field when adopting a law concerning that field, because the laws you adopt directly affect the lives of millions of people, of our entire nation. But this impact may be either positive or negative. Therefore, a deputy who has earned the people’s trust has absolutely no right to make mistakes or to forget the high responsibility entrusted to him. Only when deputies demonstrate a firm position on every draft law submitted for discussion can they justify the trust of their electors” [4, 2020].

In local governance practice, this can be expressed as follows: the state ensures minimum social guarantees, while the main focus is directed toward increasing citizens’ economic activity. Alongside subsidies and social benefits, measures such

as supporting entrepreneurship, providing tax incentives, and developing infrastructure are implemented. From this perspective, the transformation of local representative power must not be limited to organizational changes alone. Its substance, functions, and style of activity must also change. That is, it must become an institution that engages in dialogue with the population, expresses their interests, and creates effective mechanisms for realizing them.

Social innovations also play an important role in this process. New ideas, new methods of governance, and collective projects serve as effective tools for solving social problems. Mechanisms such as forms of cooperation, social entrepreneurship, and crowdfunding expand the population's opportunities for independently solving their own problems. Monitoring and evaluation systems are also of great importance in preventing social dependency. If the effectiveness of social programmes is regularly assessed, opportunities arise for their improvement. This ensures the efficient use of resources and increases the population's trust.

Philosophically, this process may be assessed as the formation of a "culture of social responsibility". Within this culture, each individual, alongside their rights, is also aware of their obligations and regards contributing to the development of society as their duty. Local representative power plays an important role in shaping this culture. Several promising directions exist for implementing this principle more effectively in the future. First, dialogue with the population can be further strengthened by deepening digital governance systems. Second, it is necessary to strengthen human capital by developing the system of education and professional development. Third, cooperation among various subjects can be strengthened by expanding mechanisms of social partnership. At the same time, studying and adapting global experience to national conditions is also of great importance.

By analysing the models of social policy, local governance systems, and innovative approaches implemented in various countries, effective elements from them can be introduced. This will serve to further improve the national model. In conclusion, it may be emphasized that the principle of "serving the interests of the population" and the concept of preventing social dependency are inextricably interconnected and cannot be separated from one another. The former is directed toward ensuring human interests, while the latter ensures that this process is sustainable and effective. The transformation of local representative power must be carried out precisely through the harmony of these two directions.

Another important dimension of this issue is linked to the phenomenon of institutional trust. For the principle of "serving the interests of the population" to function in practice, citizens must have developed trust in state institutions. Trust manifests itself as a unique capital of social relations, accelerating the implementation of decisions, strengthening social partnership, and increasing citizens' activity. If local representative power fails to earn the population's trust, even the most correct

policies and programmes may fail to yield the expected results. The principles of openness and accountability are of decisive importance in the process of building trust. When the decision-making process is transparent, when the spending of budget funds is openly disclosed, and when citizens see that their proposals are being taken into account, a positive attitude toward the state is formed among them. This, in turn, reduces social dependency, since in a society where trust exists, citizens believe in their own capabilities and act actively.

As President Sh. Mirziyoyev has emphasized, “As we raise the political and legal awareness of our population and citizens, we will move to a system of direct election of khokims. The authority of khokims to manage the corresponding representative power will be abolished. In this connection, it is necessary to adopt the laws ‘On the Councils of People’s Deputies’ and ‘On the Status of the Khokim’” [5, 2020].

From a socio-philosophical standpoint, trust and responsibility are mutually interconnected categories. Where trust exists, responsibility is also formed. If the state trusts its citizens and grants them certain powers, citizens, in turn, strive to justify this trust. This creates an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation within society. To implement this principle in the activity of local representative power, it is important to deepen the processes of delegation and decentralization — that is, by transferring decision-making authority to the local level and strengthening the population’s self-governance bodies, citizens’ participation can be ensured. This process transforms the population into an active subject and reduces social dependency. The effective functioning of the labour market is also of great importance in preventing social dependency. If there is a balance between supply and demand in the labour market and new jobs are created, the population gains the opportunity to earn income through their own labour. This, in turn, protects them from becoming dependent on state assistance. For this reason, local representative bodies must also pursue policies aimed at developing the labour market.

Demographic factors must also be taken into account in this process. In societies with a high proportion of young people, creating jobs and developing the education and vocational training system are of particular importance. Otherwise, unemployment and social passivity may intensify, giving rise to a tendency toward dependency. From this perspective, youth policy is an important component of the principle of “serving the interests of the population”. The gender dimension is also important in the struggle against social dependency. Increasing women’s economic and social activity and creating equal opportunities for them has a positive effect on the overall development of society.

Ensuring women’s employment, involving them in entrepreneurial activity, and expanding educational opportunities increases family income and reduces the level of dependency. At the same time, migration processes also affect this issue. The economic activity of citizens who have moved to other regions or abroad in search of

work increases, and the incomes of their families rise accordingly. However, mismanaging this process may give rise to social problems. For this reason, migration policy at the local level must also be pursued in a coordinated manner.

Environmental factors are also of great importance in ensuring social justice and human interests. Environmental pollution and the depletion of natural resources negatively affect the population's standard of living. Environmental policy must therefore also form an inseparable part of the principle of "serving the interests of the population". Philosophically, this principle is directed toward achieving harmony between man and society. This harmony is ensured through a combination of economic wellbeing, social justice, and moral development. If a balance among these factors is maintained, society develops in a stable and consistent manner. The future development prospects of local representative power are directly linked precisely to maintaining this balance — that is, it must become not merely a governing body, but a strategic institution ensuring social progress. For this purpose, it is necessary to make use of innovative approaches, modern technologies, and scientifically grounded policies. It should be noted here that although the principle of "serving the interests of the population" is universal in character, its implementation must take national and cultural characteristics into account. Every society has its own values, traditions, and social structure, and policy must be shaped in accordance with these factors.

As we approach the conclusion, another dimension of this issue is its connection with the concept of sustainable development. Sustainable development implies not only economic growth but also social equality and environmental balance. The principle of "serving the interests of the population" serves precisely to ensure this triad.

Summarizing the theoretical and practical approaches examined above, it may be said that the principle of "serving the interests of the population" is a complex category that defines the substantive foundation of local representative power's activity. It determines not only the goal of social policy but also the methods and mechanisms for its implementation. For this principle to function in practice, institutional, economic, legal, and moral factors must be mutually harmonized. Socio-philosophical analysis shows that the balance between ensuring human interests and preventing social dependency is one of the decisive conditions for the development of society. Where this balance is disrupted, either social inequality intensifies, or social passivity and dependency spread. Local representative power must therefore continuously strive to maintain this balance in its activities. A strategic approach is important in this process. Short-term social assistance measures must serve long-term development goals — that is, any social programme should be directed toward increasing the population's activity and expanding their opportunities for independent income generation. Otherwise, such programmes may yield only temporary results and subsequently intensify dependency.

The effectiveness of local representative power depends on its mutual relations with the population. If these relations are built on trust, openness, and cooperation, policy becomes effective. For this purpose, it is necessary to ensure public participation, make the decision-making process transparent, and strengthen accountability. Although economic factors are of decisive importance in the struggle against social dependency, moral and cultural factors cannot be disregarded either. If values such as diligence, responsibility, and initiative have not taken shape in society, even economic reforms may fail to produce the expected results. Moral and educational work must therefore form an inseparable part of social policy. At the same time, it is important to shape social activity and responsibility among citizens through the education system. Education performs not only the function of imparting knowledge but also of preparing individuals for social life. If the education system fulfils this task effectively, an active civic position is formed within society and dependency decreases. As President Sh. M. Mirziyoyev has emphasized, “Disrespect toward a deputy must be regarded as disrespect toward the people. Any official who fails to respect the people or obstructs the exercise of a deputy’s powers shall answer before the law” [6, 2023].

Developing mechanisms of social partnership is also of great importance in implementing this principle. Cooperation among the state, the private sector, and civil society institutions makes it possible to resolve social problems effectively. This serves the efficient use of resources and a fuller realization of the population’s interests. Under contemporary conditions, opportunities for the use of digital technologies are expanding.

Electronic governance, online services, and digital platforms facilitate dialogue with the population, ensure transparency, and accelerate the decision-making process. This, in turn, increases the effectiveness of local representative power. From this perspective, the future development prospects of local representative power are linked to the following directions: increasing investment in human capital, encouraging economic activity, ensuring social justice, deepening digital transformation, and strengthening social partnership. When these directions are implemented in mutual harmony, the principle of “serving the interests of the population” is fully realized.

Conclusion: In conclusion, it may be said that this principle and the concept of preventing social dependency constitute one of the strategic foundations of the development of contemporary society. They are of decisive importance in ensuring human interests, establishing social justice, and achieving sustainable development. When the transformation of local representative power is carried out precisely in this direction, it becomes an effective and sustainable mechanism for the progress of society.

The analysis shows that the principle of “serving the interests of the population” is the fundamental methodological basis for transforming the activity of local

representative power into a human-centred system directed toward ensuring social justice and sustainable development. This principle is not limited merely to social assistance or the distribution of resources, but represents a comprehensive approach aimed at increasing citizens' social activity, initiative, and responsibility. The correct interpretation and effective practical application of this principle in the process of transforming local representative power is one of the decisive factors in the development of society, since, alongside ensuring human interests, it is necessary not to restrict but, on the contrary, to encourage human activity. This requires the development of effective mechanisms against social dependency.

Philosophically, the concept of preventing social dependency rests upon the balance between human freedom and responsibility. If the state focuses solely on providing assistance, an attitude of passivity and dependency may form among citizens. Conversely, if reliance is placed solely on market mechanisms, the likelihood of intensifying social inequality increases. It is therefore of great importance to harmonize the principles of "support" and "encouragement". The findings of the research show that the effectiveness of social policy at the local level depends on the following factors: identifying and monitoring the population's needs; ensuring public participation; ensuring openness and transparency in decision-making; encouraging economic activity; and shaping social responsibility through education and moral upbringing. At the same time, developing mechanisms of social partnership, making use of digital technologies, and introducing innovative approaches all serve to increase the effectiveness of local representative power. Through this, the population is transformed not merely into an object of policy, but into its active subject. Overall, the principle of "serving the interests of the population" and the concept of preventing social dependency are inextricably interconnected, and their comprehensive implementation is a fundamental condition for modernizing the local governance system. This approach serves to develop human capital, establish social justice, and ensure sustainable development.

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