

Corruption as a Threat to Economic Security of the Country

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Abstract

The problem of corruption and the spread of corruption crime today is not only one of the main social problems, but also an obstacle to the implementation of reforms in Ukraine. Given the complexity, scale and diversity of the impact of corruption, it is an undisputed threat to national security. At the state level, corruption threatens, firstly, state security as a result of its spread in public authorities and the combination of political and business spheres; secondly, in the domestic political sphere as a result of non-compliance and violation by officials of public authorities and local governments of the laws of Ukraine; thirdly, in the economic sphere as a result of the dominance of personal interests of civil servants over national ones; fourthly, in other spheres, namely, military, social, ecological, informational, foreign policy, etc.

The origins of corruption are diverse and are formed not only in the country but also abroad. The current corruption threat is the result of the country's ineffective domestic and foreign anti-corruption policies. Acceleration of the spread and manifestation of external corruption threats is associated with a number of unresolved foreign policy issues against the background of the development of globalization and integration processes, in particular: economic and financial dependence of the country on international financial institutions and organizations; as well as from foreign countries that pose a potential threat due to their ambitious plans to expand our country; unresolved issues regarding the international legal consolidation of borders, etc.

It is noted that the current conditions for the development of state security, due to new challenges and threats, need to improve and implement new measures to prevent corruption as a negative impact of the main threats to national economic security. As a result of the study, the main measures to counter the main threats to the economic security of the state were identified.

Key words:

corruption, economic security, prevention and counteraction of corruption; national security, public administration.

1. Introduction

The prevalence of corruption in all spheres of the country's economy and its growth in absolutely dangerous indicators indicates the presence of systemic threats in the institutional and legal sphere. Therefore, the study of the corruption component as a threat to the economic stability of the country is especially relevant in today's context. The

scale of corruption in Ukraine is a modern challenge. Corruption not only undermines certain aspects of public life, but also threatens the very existence of the Ukrainian state.

The aim of the article is to study the essence of the phenomenon of corruption through the prism of economic development and its impact on the economic security of the country.

2. Literature review

The problem of corruption permeates various spheres of society and is the subject of study in various scientific schools. Lawyers, economists, sociologists, and political scientists study various aspects of corruption as a modern phenomenon. However, the analysis of existing scientific research shows that basic economic research does not meet the severity of these problems. The research of the following scholars is devoted to the issues of public administration in the field of prevention of corruption in the context of economic security: Abramova A. (2021) [1]; Al Agha S. (2021) [2]; Arefieva O. (2021) [3]; Da Rosa Mendes S. (2020) [4]; Derhaliuk M. (2021) [5]; Didkivska G. (2020) [6]; Gamgani L. (2020) [7]; Kholiavko N. (2021) [8]; Kosach I. (2019) [9]; Latif D.V. (2021) [10]; Mahmud N.M. (2021) [11]; Margasova V.G. (2011) [12]; Masiero A.F. (2020) [13]; Merli A. (2020) [14]; Novella-García C. (2021) [15]; Pohrebniak A. (2021) [15]; Popelo O. (2021) [17]; Shkarlet S.M. (2016) [18]; Sidorenko E.L. (2021) [19]; Tkachenko T. (2021) [20]; Tkalenko N. V. (2011) [21]; Tulchynska S. (2021) [22]; Wickberg S. (2020) [23]; Zatonatskiy D. (2021) [24] and others.

The authors of the article [15] claim that corruption has become one of the main problems perceived by Spanish society. Researchers have found that citizens experience a high level of frustration with politics and a general loss of confidence in the way state institutions function. The authors' research is based on Adela Cortina's definition of "highs and lows" and Agustín Domingo Moratalla's concept of "social justice". As a result,

researchers have developed tools that can be used to prevent and combat political corruption.

Researchers [11] analyzed the causes of corruption and pointed to the actions of corporations to mitigate corrupt behavior in the business environment. The authors concluded that corruption in the private sector was linked to the firm's interaction with the public sector, and that the most common corruption in the private sector was high-level corruption, an improper contribution made by high-level government officials and politicians. According to the results of the study, the causes of corruption in the private sector were identified, namely: economic, psychosocial and legal regulation.

At the heart of the researchers' article [10] is proof that e-government can reduce corruption risks. According to the authors, this will help the government to work more efficiently and avoid corruption. Researchers argue that the existence of public transparency can enable the public to control civil servants. The authors hope that the results of their research can identify the barriers that exist during the implementation of e-government to contribute to better government policies.

To obtain data on the detection of crimes related to illicit enrichment and to study "reconciliation" as a legal tool in the fight against corruption, the authors [2] use a combination of primary and secondary resources, such as assigned laws, Egyptian precedents.

The purpose of the article [19] is to study the corruption risks that arise from the active use of electronic trading platforms, including fraudulent and corrupt schemes, as well as modern technologies to neutralize them. According to the study, the authors suggest using a smart contract to minimize risks - a computer algorithm designed to enter into and maintain commercial contracts using blockchain technology. Researchers identify the main problems associated with the testing of digital technologies on the market, and consider the problems of anti-corruption legislation.

The authors of the article [23] consider two successful programs of administrative reforms promoted and disseminated by international organizations, namely: new public administration and anti-corruption policy. The article argues that, despite the fact that the discourse of differentiation - anti-corruption policy is presented as a response to the failures and omissions of the new government.

The authors study [7] the evolution of the fight against corruption and argue that it is the result of various internal and external factors, such as the development of international standards, as well as increasing political and financial scandals. This is also a manifestation of the strengthening of the preventive approach in the fight against corruption in French law.

In the research [6], the authors analyze the issues of corruption and measures to combat corruption in health

care in Ukraine using the experience of Georgia and the European Union. Researchers claim that eliminating the causes and conditions that contribute to corruption in the health care system and implementing an effective anti-corruption strategy based on good governance, transparency and zero tolerance are among the priorities for improving Ukraine's anti-corruption legislation.

The purpose of the article [4] is to determine the need to study the latest changes in legislation that have taken place in Brazil, including the establishment of consensual forms of dispute resolution and their impact on the fight against corruption and economic macro crime. The authors consider some criminological aspects of corruption and macroeconomic crime, as well as political and criminal factors that make the ideal of prevention a central vector of the modern criminal justice system. According to the study, the authors propose the main aspects related to the introduction of new consensus forms of dispute resolution in the criminal sphere, political and criminal forecasts in the treatment of corruption and organized crime and their impact on the prosecutor's office and judiciary.

The authors [14] consider the phenomenon of corruption crime from a socio-cultural point of view, which is closely related to the other side of the natural competence of criminal law and criminal policy. Scholars argue that this is a significant incentive to make some reflections on the guidelines for reform in the field of preventing and suppressing corruption, and calls for a general understanding of current trends in the penitentiary system.

According to the review of the legislative evolution of tools to combat corruption on the domestic front, the authors [13] intend to emphasize the main criminal profiles of whistleblower regulation, with special reference to the relationship between the latter and the criminal responsibility of the subjects.

3. Results

Corruption is undoubtedly a negative phenomenon that affects various spheres of society, including social, moral, psychological and economic. The spread of corruption in Ukraine and around the world has made this problem a serious threat to the economy. In the study of corruption, it is first necessary to identify aspects of this phenomenon that pose a real threat to the economic stability of the country.

Examining the stages of development in the field of discourse on the formation of state regulatory mechanisms in the field of combating corruption in different historical times, we can say that the process of corruption coincides with the emergence of human civilization. Unfortunately, there is no immunity from such negative phenomena in the economic and socio-political system, which can only

change the degree and manifestation of corruption in human life. We systematize the main factors of corruption in Ukraine (Fig. 1).

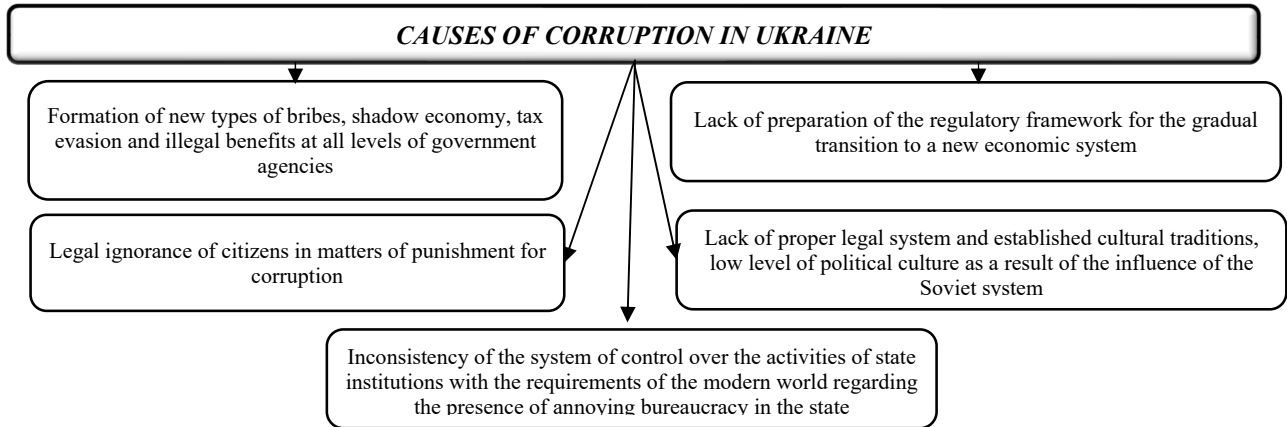


Fig. 1 Causes of corruption in Ukraine. (Source: developed by the authors)

An important area of study of national anti-corruption policy is the analysis of factual and empirical information on the activities of state institutions, as well as the results of sociological research to find actions needed to improve administration in the formation and implementation of threats to economic security.

For a comprehensive study of the problem of anti-corruption and determine the impact of corruption crimes on the effectiveness of economic security systems, it is recommended to use specific scientific approaches, which are presented in Fig. 2.

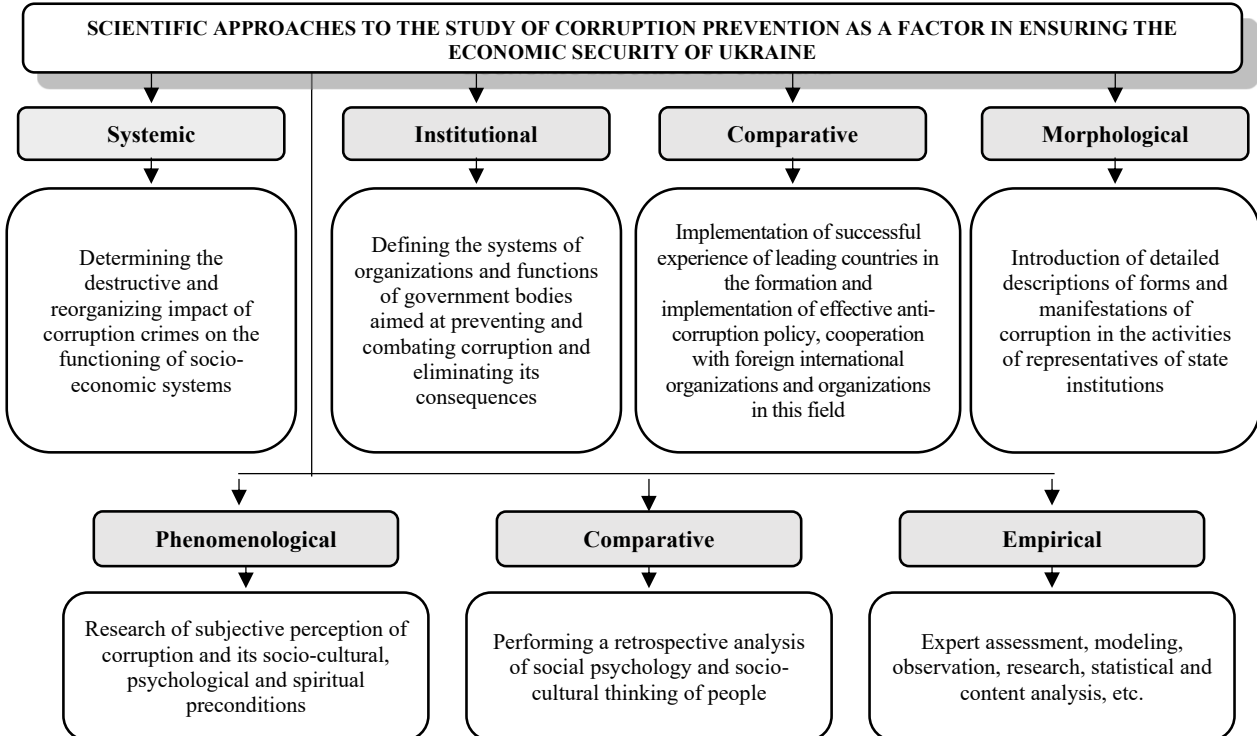


Fig. 2 Methods of research tasks of counteraction to commission of corruption crimes in questions of economic safety. (Source: developed by the authors)

In the study of corruption, it is first necessary to identify aspects of this phenomenon that pose a real threat to the economic stability of the country. Such threats include: combining crime with the legal economy through access to political power and the ability to launder dirty money; violation of competitive market conditions; delay in the emergence of effective individual owners, inefficient use of budget funds; raising prices through the inclusion of "services" in the price of corrupt officials, declining confidence in the state and reducing the ability to regulate economic processes, contributes to social inequality and increases income disparities between different segments of the population.

It is important that, according to the survey, in 2017 the previous anti-corruption strategy expired. Paradoxically, for the fourth year in a row, Ukraine has no anti-corruption strategy. That is, we have built a unique system of anti-corruption organizations (NABU, SAP, NAPC, WACS, ARMA) and launched advanced anti-corruption tools (e-declaration, Prozorro, e-data) for permanent protection / guarantee / independence restored. At the same time, sectoral reforms are taking place at different speeds and with varying degrees of success, and dozens of institutions have different understandings of how to fight corruption. As a result, it is seen as a struggle for a struggle, so it is unclear whether there is a visible effect or at least how to assess the result. Without a clear definition of specific goals, responsibilities, coordination, deadlines and performance indicators, the fight against corruption can never be effective.

The importance of adopting an Anti-Corruption Strategy is:

1. Clear definition of tasks, responsibilities, deadlines, expected results and coordination of implementation. This strategy will work in two directions at once. This means improving the overall anti-corruption system and minimizing it in the highest priority areas. This approach is effective because it increases the efficiency of anti-corruption infrastructure with tangible consequences in areas where corruption is most painful. After the adoption of the strategy, the main program will be developed. In essence, this is a "road map" for the implementation of the strategy, with a clear statement of tasks, responsibilities, deadlines and performance indicators, the achievement of which should be coordinated and monitored by the NAPC, in close cooperation with the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

2. Types of influence on citizens and business. The priority areas of the strategy were identified on the basis of a survey of citizens, businesses and experts. Thus, 8 spheres (blocks) were formulated, in which the most corrupt experience is possible or which are perceived as the most corrupt. Health and social protection, judiciary, prosecutor's office and law enforcement agencies, taxes and fees, land relations, construction of priority

infrastructure in the conditions of Russian aggression, state regulation of the economy, interaction of the state with the private sector, defense sector.

In each of these sectors, the strategy provides a set of measures to eliminate corruption. This means that, if properly implemented, the anti-corruption effects will be most noticeable to citizens and businesses.

3. Anti-corruption consequences of economic reforms. The priority areas identified in the strategy correspond to the priorities identified in government policy documents, such as land, privatization, rule of law, digitization, and so on. Thus, this strategy covers a significant number of measures needed to achieve the rule of law in the recently adopted 2030 development strategy, which provides for about thirty digital tools alone.

4. Socio-economic development and budget reduction. Studies have shown that if the level of corruption in Ukraine remains unchanged, by 2040 GDP will be about 30% of the EU average, but if Ukraine can reduce corruption, this figure will be 50%, after which the average European GDP will be available.

You can also save by systematically fighting corruption. Despite the fact that the actual effect is very difficult to calculate, the NAPC estimated the possible economic effect of the strategy at UAH 200 billion.

5. Implementation of own anti-corruption policy. Like all reforms, the fight against corruption requires not only a clear definition of tasks, deadlines and responsibilities, but also a systematic implementation, which should be reflected in the specific decisions and actions of senior leaders such as the President, the Verkhovna Rada and the Cabinet. Without this, the fight against corruption in Ukraine is doomed to end in constant "firefighting". It also requires coordination and constant monitoring of its implementation. This is what should ensure the adoption and implementation of anti-corruption strategies [25].

The anti-corruption strategy concerns the functioning of general anti-corruption systems, determines the priorities of the fight against corruption in certain areas of public administration and pays great attention to the issue of responsibility for corruption. Therefore, one of the priority sectors of public administration identified by the strategy is the economic security sector [26].

The Anti-Corruption Law of Ukraine defines corruption as the use of state powers or related opportunities for the benefit of a person authorized to perform the functions of the state or local self-government. or accept a promise or provide such a benefit; or persuade another natural or legal person, at his request, to accept or offer any promise or offer or improper benefit to another person or any person authorized to persuade that person to obtain his or her public authority, or to abuse the associated opportunities [27].

Because corruption is a social phenomenon, the development of society has influenced and, in most cases, determined the nature of development and deployment. During the evolution of man, various models of corruption were formed. Thus, depending on the characteristics of the country, there are Asian, African, Latin American, European and post-socialist models of corruption. Corruption is divided into political and economic according to purpose. At the same time, political corruption threatens the effective operation of democratic institutions and the achievement of balance between the branches of government, and economic - negatively affects the success of market institutions and regulatory activities of the state.

The economic impact of corruption is particularly dangerous. Corruption raises the level of the country's economic policy and, as a result, creates a basis for the growth of the shadow economy, which violates tax laws, the rules of doing business.

Thus, we can agree that "the economic essence of corruption is the commercialization of power, which is expressed in the purchase and sale of corporations, thereby reducing the average industrial cost and removing these corporations from the legal system" [28].

The negative consequences of corruption for the country's economic system are an increase in the share of the shadow economy, reduced efficiency of competitive market mechanisms, inefficient use of budget funds, rising prices due to rising "corruption prices", deteriorating investment climate. The shadow economy has a negative impact on the country and society as a whole. The high level of the shadow economy is the reason for the transformation of the market mechanism and disrupts the competitive regime. Enterprises operating in the shadows have a large profit (do not pay taxes, receive non-transparent government orders). The country has serious negative consequences, such as lack of tax revenues, reduction of state budget expenditures and exacerbation of social problems due to the shadow economy. According to preliminary calculations of the Ministry of Economic Development in January-September 2020, the level of the shadow economy amounted to 35% of official GDP, which is 5% less than in the corresponding period of 2019 [29].

Violation of market mechanisms of competition. Through non-transparent public procurement, government procurement and budget support were passed on to those who illegally benefited, not to competitors. This reduces market efficiency and discredits the idea of market competition.

ProZorro's public procurement system is changing paper government tenders. The state spends about 300 billion UAN a year on public procurement, which is an "abyss."

Inefficient use of budget funds. Corruption negatively affects both revenues and expenditures of the state budget.

As the level of corruption in the state increases, budget revenues decrease. In their study, V. Tantsi and G. Davudi show that lowering the rating of corruption by one step reduces government revenues by 1.71-2.51 % of GDP [30]. This decline is due to the growth of the shadow economy, declining tax revenues and social security.

State budget expenditures also suffer from corruption. Corrupt government spending is primarily financed by social spending, and social spending is also losing its target role. That is, the rich get. According to IMF estimates, the growth of corruption per unit corresponds to a decrease in the share of such expenditures by 1.32-2.19 % of GDP. In addition, the increase in corruption per unit reduces the share of spending on education and health care as a percentage of GDP by 0.34-0.45% [30].

Increases the "cost of corruption" to raise the price. Businesses give bribes to avoid paying taxes and government regulations. In Ukraine, 62 % of respondents paid bribes for tax evasion and 47 % for this, and their average size was 1.76 % of their income, which is significantly higher than the average value of the sample used in the study [31]. Since the turnover in Ukraine in 2019 amounted to UAH 487 billion each, we can assume that only in the retail sector the amount of bribes is at least 8 billion UAH [32].

Deterioration of the investment environment. Foreign investment is very "sensitive" to corruption. Rising corruption reduces foreign direct investment, not a corresponding increase in taxes. Foreign investors, who see corruption as an additional "tax" on their business, believe that for every 1% increase in this "tax rate", the impact of direct investment in this country decreases by 5 %. Reducing corruption in the country by one point increases foreign direct investment by 23.1 % [33].

4. Conclusions

Corruption is a threatening obstacle to the country's economic development. Corruption is a shameful phenomenon that affects all spheres of society, including psychological, social, political and moral. The prevalence and scale of corruption pose a real threat to the country's economic development and economic security. The main threats to economic security posed by corruption are the growth of the shadow economy, money laundering and penetration into the legal economy, inefficient use of budget funds, rising prices due to "corrupt" spending, and growing social inequality.

Undoubtedly, corruption is a complex social phenomenon that occurs over a long period of time, so it takes a lot of effort and time to overcome it.

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